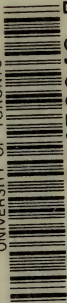


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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AN OLD MAN'S THOUGHTS
ABOUT MANY
THINGS.

by

by

George Long

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AN OLD MAN'S THOUGHTS
ABOUT MANY
THINGS.

[Long, George]



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IT is about ten years since this little book was published. Some people were pleased with it, some treated it with contempt, and some critics abused it, probably without reading it, for I believe that such things are done. The author did not trouble himself about the critics. He was satisfied if some people were amused with the book, and taught something. All the copies have been sold, and as the book is still inquired after, the publishers have ventured to reprint it, and I have read the sheets. Some new chapters are added on Education and Taxation. The author knew something of Education by his own experience, and he spent some time in reading about Taxation in foreign countries and in Great Britain. It is one of the subjects which people call dry, but every man ought to know what Taxation is, and the author has in a short compass done what he could to explain the matter. I hope that some man will take his hint, and write a history of Taxation, which would be quite as instructive as a history of wars, which breed Taxation and other miseries also.

I have added a few specimens of the author's poetry, or whatever people may choose to name it. These little pieces were written by the author long ago in the midst of serious occupations, and merely as an amusement. Some friends have thought that a few of these poems might be printed. If they please any readers, it will perhaps be those, of whom there are many in this country, who are acquainted with the legends and the poetry of the Greeks. The last piece seems to have been prompted by Horace's Epode, "*Beatus ille qui procul negotiis*," but it is hardly an imitation, nor did the author write it as a rival to that beautiful Latin poem.

G. L.





TO MY READERS.

BEING now past eighty years of age I know that I must soon pack up and be gone, but I am unwilling to take my departure without leaving something behind which will be useful not only to those who are living, but to all who may live hereafter, even if this world should last a million years ; and I doubt if it will hold out longer. For we are so busy with scratching into the earth and getting out of her all kinds of things and using them as fast as we can, and using ourselves too, that I doubt if we shall be able to go on at this rate very long. Unless Nature, the god of the philosophers, is in some way unknown to us making amends for the waste of her children and storing up new materials, we must stop for want of stuff ; just as the Lancashire mills must stop, if the Confederate States won't grow cotton enough for us, or refuse

to sell it when they have grown it, which is not very likely, or unless somebody else is good enough to make somebody work at cotton-growing for our benefit, not forgetting their own. If Nature is not doing this, I cannot see that anything else will be left for her except to make the world over again some day and to bring fresh materials up to the top by ploughing deeper. This operation will certainly cause a great disturbance and be very like what we call turning things upside down. Pyramids, temples, palaces and cotton mills; emperors, kings, queens, and popes; prime-ministers, members of parliament and shoe-blacks will all be buried more than forty fathoms deep; and perhaps shoe-blacks may lie above kings, though it matters little whether they are above them or below them, for even now a king is forgotten as soon as a shoe-black, and before he is well laid in his grave men are bending the knee before somebody who is standing in his shoes.

These philosophical reflections have long made me hesitate about writing this book, for I cannot bear the thought of its perishing, after all my trouble in making it, either by the general conflagration, which the Stoics predicted more than two thousand years ago, or by such a catastrophe as I have described in so lively and affecting a manner. It is true that I do think that this terrible cataclysm, if I may be allowed to use a fine word which does not express my meaning or any meaning at

all—I say, for it is necessary to begin the sentence again, otherwise you might not be able to join the first and the last part together, which I am quite unable to do when I read most books, I say I do not think that this terrible event (I believe that is the proper word) will happen very soon; and I have some doubts whether anybody knows when it will happen. I know very well, for I read all that is written on this subject, and indeed all that is written on all subjects, as this my book will clearly show; I know that many learned men and grave divines, for whom, as I am both learned and grave myself, I have the highest respect, I know they have fixed the exact time of the end of the world. Notice has often been given of the time before it came, and after the time was past they have found out that they were mistaken, and so very properly they give notice again. I think that they do quite right, and they should continue giving notice, and they cannot fail to be right at last. I think, however that those who fix the end very soon, as for example in the year 1900, or even much earlier, as some very learned men do, are hardly consistent in doing this and at the same time in marrying and begetting children, and giving in marriage, and scraping together gold, and dealing in railway shares, and looking after the sale of their books. For all which inconsistencies my long experience has brought me one general explanation, which I shall often apply in the course of this work; and

the explanation is this, that they do not believe what they say.

I shall certainly not expose myself to such a serious charge as writing what I don't believe. I shall not make a book for the good of mankind and myself, and at the same time talk of the end of the world being very near. Without then fixing any time for this great event either by interpretation of prophecies, in which interpretation I have observed that there is not perfect agreement, or by prophetic charts and atlases, or by deductions of reason or deductions contrary to reason, or by considerations on the nature of things in general, I have deferred the event, which I still maintain to be certain, to a remote time; remote enough to comprise the whole period allowed by statute to the copyright of this book, and remote enough to allow innumerable reprints in small bad type and on dirty paper, with a great many errors in the text, and to bring money into the pockets of publishers, who don't read and can't understand what they recommend others to buy. I have supposed a million years as the utmost duration of the present state of things and of all books included. I am quite satisfied myself, if this book shall be read a hundred thousand years hence; which, let me tell a great many authors who seem very proud of their works, is a great deal longer than their books will last.

I do not fear that I am wearying my readers. I

know that people can go on reading the dullest books for hours together, written in a style so tedious that they could not be read, if our education had not been so much improved that we can now read anything ; books, in which some unintelligible idea is drawn out in endless unintelligible periods, with arguments as they are called which are not arguments, and conclusions founded on facts which are not proved and cannot be proved, the whole ending in something which contradicts the beginning ; periods much longer than this but not near so clear, for this is written in good plain English, while the periods which I am abusing are written in a piebald language, English, Greek, Latin, and French ; French by the way more frequently wrong than right ; Italian, on the increase since the battles of Magenta and Solferino ; and Chinese and Japanese are plainly on the way to join in the medley. For these and other reasons, it is obvious, as the philosophical writers and critics say when they can't prove what they assert, that I may go on a little longer without wearying anybody except myself.

If the happy invention of printing had been known from the beginning, we might have had the experience of men of olden time, who lived ten times as long as I have lived, recorded in folios without end or octavos endless, for it matters little, when a book has no end, in what shape the volumes are. And it may be supposed that the ex-

perience of these aged men would have been ten times as great as mine, and their books ten times as wise ; but this I take the liberty of saying would be a very unsafe conclusion. For I am pretty much of the mind of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius who says that a man who has lived forty years has seen everything that is to be seen in the world. I think indeed that he was only forty years old when he wrote this, and that if he had written it in the last years of his life, he would have allowed a little longer time for seeing everything. My own judgment is that I have lived long enough to see all that a man can see in the world, and partly for this reason that men after my age see very little ; certainly I have lived long enough to hear all that is said and a great deal more than is worth listening to. This mention of Marcus Aurelius leads me to make a remark which the reader ought to bear in mind all through this book, and I make it now without considering whether it comes in the right place or not, maintaining as I do most stoutly, that a good remark is always good, contrary to the opinion of those interested persons who speak of a wise saying being spoiled by being put in the wrong place ; which piece of criticism is bred of mere envy, such persons knowing very well that they have nothing to say that is worth the trouble of remembering. On the contrary, as I have many good things to say, and as they come into my head quicker than they can run off at the



end of my pen, I am compelled to let them come as they list, and it is better that they should jostle one another a little and come in no order at all than that the world should lose any of them. For I verily believe, and I say it in serious sadness, that big books are written now-a-days, in which a man shall not find from beginning to end one single clear idea, one remark worth pocketing and keeping, or one single fact that he did not know before, but a great many false facts, and a great many true facts put in a false light. I might go on to mention various books of this kind, and I might even tell their names, if I were spiteful enough and if I did not think more of doing good myself than exposing those who do harm. But to cut this matter short and not to do like so many who run away from their subject as if they had forgotten it or were ashamed of it, I was speaking of Marcus Aurelius, and of what he said about experience. I now say that this good emperor actually says what I say that he says; and so all through this book, when I tell the reader that any wise man has said anything he may believe that I tell him the truth. And I ask him to believe me because I tell him so, and not to doubt because he does not see an exact reference to each passage with book and chapter named, and sometimes Greek and Latin and other languages printed with occasional mistakes; and how much trouble this has caused the printer, and whether it has not

sometimes almost brought an oath even out of a pious printer, I will not say. But one thing I will say—and this is the way of saying a thing forcibly—one thing I will say, which is this:—I know from my own experience, and my experience is the best part of my knowledge, that these learned references are as often wrong as right in the books of all the second-hand dealers in learning; and I say it with great grief, that these poachers on other men's lands are not near so useful as old clothesmen, for these fellows carry at least a genuine article in their bags and have paid for it, be it ever so tattered and worn; and they are very much on the increase, I mean the poachers; and I know nothing short of an act of Parliament that is likely to stop them, unless people should give over buying their books, which I am disposed to think would come to the same thing as not allowing them to be printed. I have another thing to say and then I have done with this matter, and it is this,—that the learned authors to whom these learned writers of our days refer often contradict them, from which comes the conclusion, that our fine scholar either never looked at the passage to which he refers or that he could not understand it. Nothing of this kind will be found here. I shall not quote any learned man without looking into his book; and as to my understanding what the book says, I trust that no reader will have got so far in this address without placing full confidence

in me. I have already told the reader that I am a learned man, and I am not ashamed of it, and I will not deny it; and before he has read through this book, I hope that I shall have convinced him that I am a man of sense, which is rather better than being a learned man; or at any rate if it is not better, I will say this, that learning without sense, if the thing is possible, is not worth half as much as learning and sense together; and lastly I earnestly wish the reader to believe, and I shall try to convince him of that too, that I am an honest man, and I think this is worth more than learning and sense together, though I think that an honest man should have some sense, and for my part I would not trust his honesty, if I could not trust his sense. I have now done, except that I have something to say about the size of this book, which I am happy to tell the reader will not be large, partly because I do not like trouble, and partly because I know how to pack things close without spoiling them. I have also a little to say about what the book will contain: but I need not dwell long on this because the reader himself can find out what is in the book, if he will only take the trouble to read it. If he is pleased with what I have said so far, let him go on, and I promise him that he will be better pleased the further he goes and very sorry when he comes to the end; not because I have deceived him like many wicked book-makers, but because there is no more. I

must warn my kind reader, for if he has read so far as this, I am sure that we are friends for ever, I say I must warn him or give him notice now that if he thinks this is not going to be a serious book, he is much mistaken. I have serious things to speak of and I shall speak of them seriously, though I hope I may say with Horace, beginning my first quotation with him, and borrowing for the occasion John Milton's translation :—

“ Laughing to teach the truth
What hinders ?” And again,
“ Joking decides great things
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.”

Observe the poet says “ oft,” which I interpret “ sometimes ;” for though I am fond of laughing and joking, I know there are matters which cannot be settled in that way.

Now as to the size of my book, the reader may measure it, if he likes, or weigh it, if he cannot trust his eyes. I think it is not too big to put in his coat-pocket, and if he takes this as a hint that he should always carry it about with him and turn to it whenever he does not know what to do, I commend his sagacity, for this is the very thing that I mean. I do not know, though I have thought much on the matter, whether I was born with any innate ideas, but if there is one that I brought with me into the world and will stick to me as long as I live, it is a horror of big books. And if I have made any big books myself, or have

had a hand in making them, I sincerely repent of it, and I will not do the same again ; though I am bold to say, which I believe is a current phrase, and a very bold saying sometimes, that I hope I may be excused for my big books, if they are better than other big books, or if my share in any of these big books is not so bad as what others have pitched into the lump. I have lately had a small book recommended to me by a friend in whose judgment I have great confidence. This book is entitled the *Life and Acts of the Ingenious Gentleman Don Quixote de la Mancha*. It is written in choice Castilian and it has given me much instruction and amusement. I am told that the book has been read a good deal, which I can readily believe, and that it has been translated into the English tongue, which I do not deny ; but I am not going to be taken in by any recommendation of the translation, for I never yet met with a translation of a good book, which I would purchase for one farthing, if I could read the original. And I say this out of no want of respect to translators, who are useful in their way, when they do their work well ; and being myself a translator, which I confess to my shame to be one of the acts of my life of which I am not proud, I think that my judgment about translations may be accepted as the decision of an honest critic.

I perceive however that I am rambling a little,

which I cannot account for except by my habit of reading other people's books ; for when I think on a thing without troubling myself about what others have said, I go right to the point and do not stray a hair's breadth from a straight line.

I learn then that this illustrious knight had a library of books, many of them folios, and that by reading much he went mad, and I think that those who read much and think little had better take a hint from this, or they may come to the same sad end. This gentleman's housekeeper and niece, with the aid of the village parson and the barber, took the opportunity, while the owner was lying in bed to recover from the injuries he had received by his foolish pranks, the history of which the reader must look after himself—I am coming to the practical lesson that we may learn from the story ;—while he was on his bed I say, these friends very wisely burnt most of his big books and some little books too, which I have no doubt deserved it as well, and walled up the chamber in which all this pernicious stuff had been stored. Their reason for this act of faith was that the books were books on chivalry and the reading of them had turned the Don's brain. I do not deny that such books are very mischievous and that it was right to burn them, and if most of our modern talebooks—observe, I don't say all, but I do say most—were burnt, it would be a very good

thing for those whose brains are turned by them. But it was not only the quality of the Don's books which did the mischief, but the quantity ; and if he had not waded through such a prodigious heap of stuff, he might only have been half as mad as he was ; perhaps not madder than most people are now who feed on the like kind of food, but do not eat so much of it. I can't for my part, after long studying the question, see much difference between the impossible adventures of the Don's books of chivalry, and the books of many of our story-tellers, except that the Don's books were so evidently fictions that none but a fellow who was naturally crackbrained could have been driven stark mad by them, while many of our stories seem to lie within the limits of the possible, while they are many degrees out of the limits of the probable ; and so the unwary are led into a land of dreamy reading, and think that they are learning something of human nature and human life, while in fact they are only deluding themselves with the follies of somebody who knows as little of nature or life as themselves.

As I shall have a chapter on books I shall say no more at present. All that I have said is intended to recommend my own book, because it is little, and to show my great abhorrence of big books, which ought to be little books or no books at all, and not of 'big books which as one may say

are naturally big, because if they exist at all, they must be big, having in their nature or constitution the element of bigness. As to such naturally big books, I would allow them to exist, if a good reason could be shown why they should be brought into the world. If they are wanted, we must take them according to their nature, as we take cocoa-nuts for example, husk, shell and all; in which I never found anything worth the trouble of opening them for except the milk, for as to the rest I would as soon eat the hard shell or its overcoat as the hard indigestible lining. Now a little milk out of a cocoa-nut is not much, but it is something for those who like it. So we are content with a book, if it must be big, in order that we may get a little good out of it. But as to the big books of all kinds, which ought to have been little or a great deal less, or ought never to have been born, I am of opinion that Don Quixote's housekeeper should have the handling of them; or they might go, as Horace says, into the streets where pennyworths are made up of something that somebody wants.

I had almost forgotten one thing. I may be thought to be all on the side of little books and on the side of all little books. Heaven forefend! I hate some little books more than big books, if it is possible. Some of them are bad by nature, naturally, as we say, in their very constitution.

All along I have meant to say that I like a little book, but I mean a little book which is also good. There is one class of little books which is worst of all, little books which are made out of big books, not by any process like distillation or whatever other way there may be of getting out of a thing what is best worth having, but in some way that I do not understand, not having tried my hand at the thing ; and therefore I leave those who are skilled in the art to tell their secret, or to keep it, which if it is worth anything to them, I have no doubt they will do. These books go by various names, epitomes, summaries, abridgments, handbooks and so on. Big history books are much exposed to the danger of being laid hold of and converted into little books, which cost the maker nothing more than his paper and ink, and a pair of scissors, and bring in much profit. These abridgments, the great Lord Bacon, somewhere in his works, if I recollect right, calls the moths of history ; and without stopping to inquire exactly what he meant, I conclude that he thought them to be noxious vermin. Books of this kind are made to get the shillings out of little boys and girls, or their parents' shillings, which is all the same. Some of them discuss in a few pages the events of many centuries and the most important changes in the course of human affairs, and with such an air of innocence and simplicity, and such a

positive way of speaking, that, like a lying witness who goes on uncommonly well till he is cross-examined, we are almost persuaded that these little books, if they tell us little, tell us nothing but the truth and all that is worth knowing. I have myself, or as I should say if I were writing in a review, we ourselves have examined and cross-examined some of these said books, and we have found them to be the most impudent lying witnesses that ever came under our notice; and if there are any among them which deserve a better character, and we hope it is so, we are sure that they will only thank us for what we have said of the rest.

I have been carried away by my love of truth and hatred of knavery to write so much about these books big and little, and especially about little books for the plain reason that I would not have mine confounded with these impudent impostors. My book is not big, nor an abridgment nor a summary, nor an imitation, nor anything else. It is what it is, and those are the shortest words in which I can describe it. I ought to say that it will be written, like this address, in the English language, in which very few books are written now, and that it will be so plain that a man of ordinary understanding, which I believe is the commonest kind of understanding, will be able to read it without any dictionary, Hebrew, Greek, 10

Latin, German or any other, or without asking the parson of his parish the meaning of any of my words. The words as I said will be English, the style plain and simple, but not dull, and the matter will be such as concerns everybody, and therefore everybody who is wise will buy the book. The subject I will explain in a few lines, for being much tired with writing this long address, I begin to be really afraid that the reader may be tired too, notwithstanding my great confidence in his power of enduring things much longer and more tiresome than this, thanks, as the Frenchmen say, to the excellence of our modern education.

I have done, and now to my work. I shall treat of man's life, I was going to say from his cradle to his grave, and I think this expresses pretty well what I mean; or following Shakspeare's divisions of human life, I shall say something on each of these divisions or stages, having myself gone through all of them except the last. But I am not so ambitious as a great French writer who under the title of *Comédie Humaine* designed to present a complete picture of human society, or French society rather. I do not know if Balzac finished his undertaking. Certainly nobody could have done it except himself; and he has done a large part of it in such a way as will never be done again. My little book is not a novel, though it is as true as the best novel. It contains a little about a great many things, and

therein differs from those books which contain a great deal about nothing.

Quidquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus nostri est farrago libelli ;

which I leave to the reader to translate, if he can.
If he cannot, I won't help him.





OF THE FINAL CAUSE.

THE ancient philosophers tried and some modern philosophers have tried to discover the final cause, the end, the purpose for which this world exists and all other worlds and all that is in this world and in all others. They could not find it out, but I have, or this book would never have been written. The final cause of all things is writing and reading. Writing and reading, it may be necessary to remark, stand to one another in a certain relation or correlation, but they are not co-extensive : they are not strictly convertible. Writing is the larger term : it holds more : it is more universal : it is absolutely universal. There are more infinities than one, as everybody knows. There is the infinite of all infinities, and infinite subordinate infinities, and so on to all infinity. In fact there is no finite, except it be that which I am going to mention.

I said that writing and reading are not conver-

tible. The real correlative of infinite writing is finite reading, if philosophers will only admit this new kind of correlation ; or to bring the expression within the limits of the limited understandings of those for whom I write, very much writing has for its correspondence, according to Swedenborg's doctrine, some reading, it may be little or much. If all writing were followed by reading, as all true causes are followed by effects, then the publishers would have an easy time of it and all authors would be as rich as some are. As this is not so, writing is not a true cause nor reading a true effect of writing, but they stand to one another in some kind of relation, which it would require a Schelling to discover.

As there never was a beginning of all things so there will never be an end of all things. When we talk of the beginning of a thing, we talk as men who know not what they say ; but if we will only shut our eyes, and so shut out this world of matter which is ever deluding us, or still better, if we will only fall asleep, as all wise men do, who can afford it, whenever they feel inclined, and then attend, if we can, to what is going on in our transcendental part, we shall easily discover that beginning and end, time and space, are mere names invented for the sake of convenience, in order to enable us to find our way and let others know what we are about. To use the common language of men, first, because I have no other, and

next, because they would not understand it if I had, I affirm that from all eternity things have gone in certain cycles, as the Greeks call them, and things will thus go on to all eternity; one series of things, to use the only expression suited to our capacities, will succeed another, and yet it will be no succession except to us who talk about it as such; so when I say that writing and reading are the final cause of the present constitution of the universe, it is plain that I am speaking in a finite sense, as a writer and somewhat of a reader, and that I do not mean to say that there have not been cycles in which men neither wrote nor read; and I could imagine a state of things in which we could do very well without either, something like that state in which Bramah for an infinite time was employed in the contemplation of his own infinite perfections. Nor do I mean to say that there will not be cycles in which men will have another final cause than reading and writing; and I think it is probable that in other worlds at least beyond our solar system, there may now be happy states of existence in which there is neither paper nor ink making, nor printing nor writing nor reading nor reviewing, and neither sermons nor pamphlets. For I cannot assent either to the assertions or the arguments of those philosophers, or of that philosopher, if there is more than one, who maintain or maintains, that these wonderful orbs which are hung like beautiful lamps in the sky are

put there to light us only, or to amuse us with looking at them, or in order that we may make maps and catalogues of them, or observe their places and motions, and find out our way by them on land and sea, for they may serve all these purposes and others too that we wot not of. I think that there must be somebody in them or in some of them, who knows that two and two of necessity make four and that a triangle has three angles and no more.

All this I have said by way of clearing up any obscurity or removing any contradictions that I may have been guilty of at the beginning, in the human sense I mean it, of this chapter; and I wish all writers would do the same, and after they have blundered in the first part of their book, set all right somewhere else, as I do and shall do. For to use the words of a truly able man, whom I once heard deliver a lecture, either I am logical or I am nothing; and as I know that I am not nothing, I am quite sure that I am logical.

Herodotus tells us of a Thracian tribe whose custom was this. When a child was born, all the kin came together and lamented over him for the sufferings that he must endure now that he had come into the world, and they went through all the list of human calamities. But when a man died, they laid him in the ground with mirth and rejoicing, counting all the evils from which he had escaped into the enjoyment of perfect bliss. I can

never read this without being moved by the simple truth with which these poor people in a few words told the story of human life, and their consistency in rejoicing over the departure of their brethren from a world of tears and troubles to a better world in which they firmly believed. Commentators of course have nothing to say here, at least none that I know: they have more important business in hand than to teach people to get anything good out of what they read. But more of this when I speak of Commentators, and I promise you they will not come off very well.

How many thousands daily enter into this world over whom those, who have helped to bring them here, might and would, if they had as much sense as these Thracians, grieve and lament instead of rejoicing. For if their children escape being hanged by others or hanging themselves, and a certain number will inevitably have this fate, or if they do not perish by fire, sword, pestilence or famine, or in some of the endless ways of destruction by which man is carried off, there still remains a list of sorrows longer, I think, than the Thracians could reckon, by which human life is made most miserable. Those who escape either by good luck or their own care are not many; nor are they the people who feel most for the sufferings of others. I have indeed known some notable exceptions, men who have had but a small share of the sorrows of humanity and yet could

shed a tear for misfortune and, what is still better, give a helping hand. I think these men must have been endowed with all the best part of our nature and as little as possible of what we call the bad part. So we see some who were born in high place and to great wealth, and yet are neither proud nor insolent, nor abuse their riches, but use them well. Such men are indeed exceptions, and though we know that they have not altogether made themselves what they are, they may have improved a good material, and for these pains we honour and love them. Sometimes too we see a man who has risen from a low degree to honourable station and affluence who bears his fortune well, but this is rare. It is an old saying, as old as Aristotle, and older, that those who rise suddenly to wealth and rank are not such good masters as those who have them by a long line of ancestors. There is truth in this, but it is not all true, and the same remark applies to all general rules about human life. Perhaps the world is not growing better at the same time that it is growing richer, for in my own experience I never yet knew a man who had raised himself in the world, or, if you like, had been raised more by lucky circumstances than by his own merit, who was not spoiled by it. And here I am of Plutarch's mind, who was a good judge of men and manners, and wrote the only Lives that we yet have which will always be read. Plutarch, who knew this fact perhaps

by his own experience and, if not in that way, he knew it from the experience of others, raises this question, Whether the man who is made insolent by prosperity, is really changed by his good fortune, or whether he still is what he was, and only shows what he is when he has the opportunity. He does not settle this question, because he had something else to do when he asked it, and so have I. But I know his opinion on the matter, and I know my own, which I shall not tell my reader, because the answer is of no practical use, and the knowledge of the truth in this case cannot alter the fact.

We who are in the world then must make the best of it and go on introducing others into the same trouble; and though I by no means would discourage marriage, I would warn all those who are about to marry that it is a very serious business every way, and they must be prepared to expect a good deal of trouble even if they should be as happy in marriage as it is possible to be. I will tell them what the Stoical Satirist says, who said many good things and better than I can say them:—

Shall men then wish for nothing? If you ask
For my advice, allow the gods themselves
To measure out for us our proper portion;
For in the place of what we like the best,
The gods will give us what is most befitting.
Led by a furious impulse and blind passion
We seek for wife and children; but they know
What kind of wife and children we shall have.

There is no great danger of the world stopping for want of a regular supply of children, for the supply, if we may call it so, is determined by other things more than by the demand. The poor at least never fail to add to the stock, and generally more than are wanted, or more than can be well fed and clothed. But there is a class, not the poorest, who for reasons which they know best, in certain states of society neglect this business, and it was such persons, I suppose, whom the Roman censor Metellus Numidicus addressed, when he said: "If we could do without wives, my fellow citizens, we should all save ourselves that trouble, but since nature has so arranged it that there is no living comfortably with them and it is quite impossible to live without them, we ought to consider the permanent interests of the state rather than our own temporary comfort." Some learned men, a long time after, who had met for social intercourse and mutual improvement and had listened to the reading of this oration, said that Metellus ought not to have spoken thus, when his purpose was to recommend marriage. But one of the company maintained that he did right in telling the truth, for if he had not done so, everybody would have known that he was deceiving them. Accordingly Metellus, who was a grave and honest man, told them exactly what they might expect, and he trusted to their good sense to see that without marriage the state could not subsist.

I expect then, for the reason which Metellus gave, as well as for other reasons which he did not mention, that we shall have more marriages among those who are better able to provide for their children than among the folks who have fewer means or none, and that they will not leave this important business altogether to the "blind passion" of those whom they often look down on with so much arrogance and contempt. This will be the only way of providing a regular succession of such boys as those for whose benefit I am writing, for it will be plain to any man who reads this book that I am making it for others than the hewers of wood and drawers of water. If I live long enough, I may try to do something for them too ; but that is not my present purpose.

I suppose then my young gentleman already introduced on the stage, for we know on good authority that all the world's a stage, but I do not intend to look after him particularly till he is breeched and sent to school. What an infinite number of books have been written and might still be written on the long clothes and petticoat period of existence. I think that if I took this matter in hand, I should never end. But that I may leave nothing incomplete, I will put in a few words all that can really be said to the purpose.

If it is true that if the foundation of a building is not safe, the upper part will not stand ; and if it is true generally, that what precedes in the

order of what we call time determines that which comes after and in a manner out of that which goes before, we ought to pay more attention to a child during the first few years than afterwards. But we do just the contrary, or at least many of the wealthy do. They leave the boy to nurses and servants, from whom he receives the first principles of religion, morality and philosophy, and if this is not a sufficient reason for the silliness and servility which often mark the child's future life, I can give none; always supposing as I do, that most children have a capacity for learning enough to play their part decently on the stage of life. One might suppose that if a man goes to the cost of taking a house, hiring servants, marrying a wife and paying for marriage settlements and so forth, and then begets children, for which purpose he has gone through all this trouble, he would at least look after the children when he had made them.

If the father has not time to look after the boy, the mother must take him in hand, but I recommend both of them to do what they can. I suppose they will see that he is well washed, till he can wash himself, that he goes to bed in good time and rises early, that he eats good plain food at regular hours, and that he is as much with them or the mother as may be possible, unless they should think that he will not get much good that way, and so turn him over to the servants as the less evil.

The education of the ancient Persians was exceedingly simple. The boy was taught to ride, to shoot with the bow and arrow and to speak the truth. I approve of the riding, and it cannot be taught too soon, if a man would ride well. Whether the boy should begin with a rocking-horse, a donkey or a real horse may be matter for consideration. If it is possible, I recommend a real horse, and of course one of a size suited to the small dimensions of the rider. Shooting in my system will come later, and I suppose that my boy when he goes to school will belong to a volunteer corps, be properly drilled and in due time arrive at rifle practice. Telling the truth should be certainly taught, and if this is done, the great question whether virtue can be taught will be solved practically. But how it is to be taught is the difficulty. A love of truth is the foundation of justice and of nobleness of character. In its largest sense it comprises every virtue. He who loves truth not only abstains from lying, and slander and all evil speaking, but he seeks truth as the best and highest object of existence. A child acquires the habit of being truthful, if we can prevent him from lying, for if he never lies, he has learned to speak the truth. As children imitate those about them, they will probably seldom lie, if they never hear anybody else lie; and as it is said that servants are sometimes guilty of lying and various kinds of deception, for which no

doubt they can give sufficient reasons, it is not prudent to intrust too much of the child's education to them. If the father and mother are not very exact in the observance of this virtue, I care not how little the child sees of them.

The first thing to be attended to after this cardinal virtue is the health of the boy. If his body is not sound and strong, there is no hope for him. Even if he should have a good disposition and a large capacity, he will make but a poor man, if he is feeble and sickly. A few exceptions are nothing against my assertion. There are some men with very feeble health and great talents who do great things by the energy of their intellectual powers; but the mass of mankind possess only moderate mental endowments, and we cannot expect more of them than plain common-sense and capacity to learn what is most necessary. Yet these men with the addition of good health and strength become useful members of society and form the really effective part of a nation, and often rise to the highest places.

The amount that a child can learn well in the first eight or ten years of his life is a mere trifle. He may learn more in a few months when he is of ripe age than he can learn even in the first fifteen years of his life. Yet the little that he can learn in his early years, if we give him only what is suited to his capacity, is the foundation of all the rest. If he can learn to read well, to pronounce

his own language distinctly and forcibly, which most Englishmen never learn to do, and to put down on paper the true forms of the words which he speaks and which look so strangely different to the eye from what they sound to the ear, he has done something. This is vulgarly called spelling and it is generally taught in a way as absurd as many other things are. A child who can really write correctly all the words that he hears spoken has accomplished a very difficult thing; for I doubt if there is any language in which the spoken and the written words are so perversely at variance as in ours. I strongly recommend that he be taught to write a bold clear hand and never be allowed to write foolish copies which only tire and disgust him. I remember well a very eminent merchant who told me that he came to London as a boy with some letters to a mercantile house, where he had very little prospect of getting employment. He was asked to show a specimen of his handwriting, which was much liked. He was taken into the house and became in time the chief partner, and a wealthy man. He had indeed other qualities of the highest kind, but he said that if he had not written a good hand, he would not have been received.

There is another matter in which young boys should be carefully taught, and that is arithmetic. There is no doing without some knowledge of arithmetic. Most people can add up a bill, but all

cannot do even this well. A boy who is taught the first four rules as they are called with the reasons of them, and can apply his acquirements to the solution of most of the little problems which may be solved by these simple means, has acquired a very great power. The four rules comprehend more than the ignorant suppose, and a great deal more than even those people imagine who have acquired some practical facility in them without understanding the principles by which they work.

If to this we add the reading of a few easy books adapted to a child's age, and some of the best specimens of our poetry which are suitable to his capacity, I would send the boy to school with confidence that he will soon learn more than those who go only with a little bit of bad Latin badly taught or worse French still worse pronounced.





OF SCHOOLS.

LET any man try to imagine how we should do without boys' schools. There would be no peace in the house, and the state would be all in confusion ; if we admit that a state consists of families ; which I believe to be the truth. We see then the necessity of schools, if for nothing else, to rid us of our boys and keep quiet at home. It is generally supposed that schools have other uses too, which we shall soon come to.

I cannot find much about schools in the ancient writings of the Hebrews, though I have looked for it. Indeed I am not sure that this people had boys' schools. The Greeks and Romans, the ancients, as we often call them, had schools, and there is frequent mention of them. Herodotus tells us of a school of one hundred and twenty children in the city of Chios, a town school probably, with something wrong in the building, for

the roof fell in and killed all of the children save one. He does not say what became of the masters. Perhaps they rushed out, when they saw what was going to happen. This great misfortune was only a sign that others were coming, for the pious historian remarks that the Deity is used to give warning when great misfortunes are about to fall on a city or a nation. But there was no warning about the school, though it seemed a heavy misfortune enough. This story reminds me of the learned Dodwell, who was of the same mind as Herodotus, for he says that it is certain that all things of great moment which related to the church were foretold to Cyprian in visions; and yet in spite of this fact, the arch-heretic Middleton doubted about such things.

I might add other evidence that little boys and big boys went to school in ancient Greece, but I spare my readers the proof of what they will believe without evidence, and I hasten to the Romans, who are always coupled with the Greeks. When I say that everybody knows the story of the schoolmaster of Falerii, who took his boys out for a walk, and betrayed them to the Romans who were besieging the town, I only write as people now write in the fulness of their own knowledge and their ignorance of what others know; for I do not believe that everybody does know this story. The Romans who were always generous in those early times, when we know so little about

them, and very ungenerous in later days when we know them better, tied the schoolmaster's hands behind his back and gave him up to his scholars who whipped him into the town. The people of Falerii after such liberal treatment could not do otherwise than surrender to the Roman general Camillus.

M. Tullius Cicero went to school when he was a boy, and distinguished himself among his companions, as we are told and can readily believe. There was even flogging in the schools in Horace's time, and he has immortalized the name of Orbilius, who laid on with a heavy hand, as some distinguished English masters have done within living memory, but they have not been recorded so far as I know in ever-living verse. I am unable to go further into this subject for want of the necessary learning, but I note the want of a good history of Greek and Roman schools, and place it among the things which I desiderate. I recommend the matter to the industry of some learned German, with a request that he will not be sparing in his references and citations; and when he has written his book, I can comfort him by the assurance that some Frenchman or Englishman will make a light article out of it, if a penny is to be got by the job.

I must now speak of the Druids, in order that I may return to my subject of schools, though the reader may perhaps hardly guess how the Druids

are to help me out of the difficulty. But he will see, and the hint may be of use to him in making his own books. Caesar informs us in his commentaries on the Gallic war that great numbers of young men resorted to the Druids to learn their wisdom, and for better reasons too. A Druid was not liable to military service, he paid no taxes like other folks, and generally he was free from all the burdens which have oppressed the unlucky Gaul from Caesar's time to this present year. With such a pleasant prospect before them many young men of their own choice went to the Druid schools, and others were sent by their friends and relations. I consider it certain that the young gentlemen got board and lodging for little or nothing, though this supposition requires us to suppose further that every applicant was not taken in. But by supposing that admission to these schools was obtained by "competitive examinations," we reconcile the certain fact of great numbers being taught in the Druid schools with the necessary assumption that the numbers must have been limited in some way, if the education was free of cost. However this may be, the boys were kept to their work, some for twenty years. They learned by heart a great number of verses, and it is a very moderate addition to Caesar's text to add that some of the boys made verses too. The Druids could write, for they had the Greek characters, which had been introduced into Gaul by

the Greeks of Marseille ; but they did not commit their verses to writing, though they used writing for ordinary purposes. Caesar suggests two reasons why the Druids did not put their verses in writing ; first, because they did not wish their knowledge to be made common : they were rather opposed to the education of the common sort, a reason which many among us can understand and will approve : second, because they did not wish their pupils to rely on written words and to pay less attention to the cultivation of the memory. The great soldier adds this remark, that it happens to most people, who trust to what is written, that they take less pains in thoroughly learning and in strengthening the memory. This short remark, as is usual with him, contains in a few words enough matter for a modern essay. He means that the thing which is to be learned, verses in this instance, is to be committed to memory in such way that it will never be forgotten ; he also means that it must be something worth committing to memory, and I think he means that there would not be a great deal of this sort, and so a boy would have only little to learn and he would learn it well. As to what he says about people who trust to the written word, we may apply it to those who put down everything in writing, make endless notes and collections, and of course can neither remember what they have collected nor anything else that is worth knowing. This hint

about memory may be worth something, for a real good memory is not a natural gift, as it is called, though some have more capacity of this kind than others; but a serviceable vigorous memory is made by hard labour at a thing till it is completely mastered, and then the understanding of the thing and the memory are one. There are memories which retain everything and the worthless more readily than the good, as there are appetites which stick at nothing that will go down a man's throat; and skins too as I have observed which will lay hold of any dirt that is floating about and keep it. But I am speaking of a memory which has some discrimination and has the power of resisting the impressions of nonsense.

These young Druids were taught theology, and one of the doctrines was that men's souls do not perish by death. They learned a good deal too about the motions of the heavenly bodies, about the magnitude of the world and of different countries, about the nature of things (rather a wide subject), and about the power of the immortal gods. In fact if their teachers knew anything about what they taught, these young Gauls learned much more than many of our boys who go to great schools. I assume that they could repeat well their verses, and spell correctly any word in them, which is a vast deal more than many of our youngsters can do.

Those who wished to learn the whole system

more completely used to come to Britain, to our own favoured island, which was the original source of Druidical learning, as it is now the centre of all science and knowledge. The people of Britany no doubt conveyed these ardent learners to our shores, for they were the great naval people of that day and built strong oak ships and anticipated modern invention by making iron cables. I think we may assume that the Druid teachers of Britain being of greater repute than their Gallic brethren were really more learned; and if the Gaul could write, I assume that the Briton could write too, and that our ancestors were not such ignorant brutes as the ignorant suppose them to have been.

I am now again on British soil where I shall firmly plant my foot to wander no more, and I shall finish my discourse of schools.

There are only scanty materials, indeed hardly any for the history of schools in Britain during the Roman occupation. But there must have been some schools, for Tacitus tells us that the noble British youth in the time of Agricola were instructed in letters, they learned the Latin tongue, and they cultivated the eloquence in which their masters excelled. The Britons learned their forensic eloquence from the Gauls, as Juvenal says. The Gaul had originally no lawyer. The Druids who had all the learning had the law too in their hands. But the Romans transplanted the lawyer

to Gallic soil, where the animal became acclimatized, as we term it, and it has since thriven wonderfully both in France and England.

I do not profess to write the history of schools, because I do not know it, which however my readers will consider a very insufficient reason, when they daily see that people do write about things of which they know nothing. I have read somewhere that Theodore archbishop of Canterbury founded a school in that ancient city, of which I suppose that the present cathedral school may be the representative. The religious houses and religious establishments were the first schools both here and in other countries, and there was a good reason for it. The clergy had all the learning then, and the teaching of youth must have been in their hands, for there was nobody else who could teach. Here we see then the principle practically established that a place of education was connected with the religious system. If a man should now set about founding a place in which boys should be lodged and taught, he could not do anything else than make the teaching of some religious system a part of his plan ; and if there was a religious system to which the greater part of the educated people, and those of highest station belonged, he would, if he were wise, make that system the foundation of his school, as he would clearly see that in no other way would his plan succeed. If he were founding a school in

which boys were merely taught and not lodged, he might omit all religious instruction from his plan and leave it to the parents of the children. But such a foundation, though it might be useful in large towns, would never have the consistency and unity which are secured by connecting the teaching of the school with some religious system. A man may think what he likes about religion : he may reject it altogether as a part of useful education ; he may say that it is the business of parents to give their children religious instruction, if they choose, or to omit it, if they choose, as many would certainly do ; but he will never succeed in this country in establishing a place of education, if he excludes religious instruction. Experience proves that a state cannot subsist without some religion, and that a state is most firmly established when the great mass of the people are of the same religion. Now all the states of western Europe are of one religion in name, but in fact some of them and particularly England contain innumerable sects, who hate one another as much as they hate the Jew, the Turk and the infidel, and till people mend their manners in this respect, there is no use in trying to bring them together. A prudent man therefore who looks to the founding of a durable place of education will so order it, that it shall be for the use of some particular class of Christians large enough to supply it with good teachers and plenty of scholars.

I can easily foresee that all this will seem a very narrow and illiberal view of things to the philosophers of the present day. But I care not for them; nor would I propose a Utopian scheme, however I might be pleased with it, if I were certain that it would only live in my brains and never could be a reality. I take the world as it is, and while I admit that the only hope of its improvement is in the early education of our youth, I maintain that we can only make well educated men by bringing them up in places, where there shall be a complete unity of purpose and a teaching of some religious system. The world may some time be wise enough to have places of education which will suit everybody and exclude nobody; but if this ever happens, it will be brought about by all religious bodies educating their children in the best way that they can to make them honest and sensible men, and by the state accepting into its service all these children without any distinction of sect and creed.

When a prudent man thinks of sending his son to a school, he should think what he will get for his money. Those who have a certain amount of money and a certain position in society, as the phrase is, generally go as far as they can in the matter of expense and sometimes much further than is wise. People pay very large sums for their sons at school, but this does not prove that they pay or are willing to pay large sums for edu-

cation. The proof of this is the fact that rich people are often very niggardly in any dealings which they may have with private teachers in their own houses. Men and women too, for women are notoriously hard bargainers, will invite a private teacher to call on them at their own house about lessons to their dear children, and instead of simply declining to make an engagement, when the terms do not suit them, they will ask for an abatement. They will chaffer like an old Frenchwoman over the purchase of a cabbage; or as a pious patron of poor needlewomen will often try to beat down their scanty prices. Those who do not know these facts, know little of what is going on in the genteel world. I mean to assert that parents often pay very large sums only to get their sons into the higher kinds of schools, and that what they pay so dear for is not education, but something else, beef and mutton for instance, indifferent lodging, worse teaching, and the gratification of their own vanity. Marcus Aurelius among other things says he learned from his great grandfather to pay good teachers liberally; and I recommend the emperor's example to all who have money enough to buy good teaching, for it cannot be had without paying for it, though it is by no means true that it is always good because it is dear.

My readers of course know, for it is polite to assume that a man's readers know everything,

but if they should not know already, they will know now, that Socrates took no money for his teaching. To this some clever disputant will reply, Yes, but he did not keep a school. I admit the objection, but it is worth nothing. He did teach those who chose to hear him talk, and if they were good listeners, they would learn a good deal from him. But if we must take money now for teaching, it would be much better to take it for teaching and governing youth, and not to take it for something else under the name of teaching.

That would be the best constituted school in which the charge for food and lodging should be such only as to cover the real cost and no more. The other part of the charge should be made for instruction and the government of the boys. This cannot be done except in a large school, which has a permanent foundation, either the gift of some liberal donor of past times or established by the contributions of liberal men of the present day. The possession of an ample building and good play-ground is a necessary part of a school, and if all is well managed, this may be sufficient without any other funds than the annual payments of the pupils.

We hear a good deal of schools called public and even of the great public schools. But the word public is a mere deception. Public schools

exist in some of the American states. They are supported by taxes and they are for all who choose to go to them. These are public schools. We have endowed schools, many of them very rich, and some of them give free education to all who choose to go ; at least these are the terms of the founder's will in some schools. We have also many schools commonly called private, which men and women keep for their own benefit, and sometimes for the benefit of their pupils also. The difference is this. The endowed schools are permanent, and their success depends partly on the head master and his assistants, and partly on custom and fashion. They have the element of perpetuity in them, and have been and are most valuable to the country. The private school is sometimes larger than many endowed schools, and, it may be, often better too ; but its life is that of a man at the most. There is no other difference between the endowed schools and others. The private schoolmaster seeks his own profit, and so do the masters of our so-called public schools. The great profit comes in both cases out of boarding and lodging boys, and not out of teaching.

Why should it not be so, it will be said : it cannot be otherwise. Masters must live and save something. I say so too. If it cannot be ordered otherwise, it must be as it is, and people must go

on paying all sums from £20 a year to £200 and more, and they must be content with what they can get.

Ask any man if he does not think that the good education of his children is the best service that he can do them, and you may be sure that he will say Yes. His notions of education may be very vague and even false, but he knows what you mean and he knows his own meaning. He means that his children must be prepared in some way for the time when they will be their own masters, and form a part of that whole which we call a political society, a nation. Perhaps he may profess some respect or regard for those who manage this important business of education, and if he is a man of sense he will respect them ; but everybody knows in what estimation a schoolmaster is held, an honest good schoolmaster, if he is poor. For if he is rich, the case is altered, and he takes a rank from his wealth which his profession does not give him. If he has great talent and acquirements, he will command some respect by them alone, provided he is not very poor. I have always been struck with the truth of a remark of Montesquieu, who had been in England and knew us, I think, rather better than we know ourselves. He says, the English esteem only two things, wealth and merit. The reader may employ himself in finding the explanation of this part of our character, if he can, and while

he is busy about that which he may never discover, I shall employ myself in making some use of the ingenious Frenchman's true observation ; but for the ease of the reader, and my own, which I always consider first, it will be done in the next chapter.





OF RICHES.

MONTESQUIEU also said: I should never be consoled for not having made a fortune if I was born in England; I am not sorry for not having made one in France.

I don't care much about the headings of my chapters. I put something which will draw the curious, and I renounce all title of Englishman, if this is not a title that will stop those who turn over the leaves of this book. My chapters contain a little of everything, and so I shall make good what I promised in the beginning, without being bound to any order, which I have observed to be often only another name for disorder and confusion.

I can imagine some careful father who has read so far and thought my advice good, I can imagine the eagerness with which he will begin this chapter. He will expect me to show him how his

youngster shall grow rich. Poor man! I am going to show him how his dear boy may be better without wealth. Shall I begin by quoting Scripture to him, for which he professes such profound respect? "Give me neither poverty nor riches," said the wise man, and he said well.

Poverty brings many evils with it, it is true. But poverty is a relative term. What is poverty to one man is wealth to another. A man is more than poor, who wants that without which life cannot be sustained in comfort, and health maintained. If then I were giving advice to a young man, I would say, choose, if you can, some occupation in life suitable to your abilities and your means for pursuing it, and stick to it. Live under your income, and always put something by, and if you reach a fair age, you will find that your small savings will have made you as rich as an honest man should wish to be. I should like my youth, whom I am directing, and whom I suppose to have had a good education, to choose an occupation which will leave him a little time for reading and self-improvement; or at any rate, to find some time for such work, and in this country and climate he may easily do it. For three-fourths of the year among us a man is better at home after his day's work is done than abroad; and some employment for the mind gives pleasure and health and keeps us from things that bring no real pleasure and injure the health. Some useful pursuit

strengthens a man's mind and makes him better able to bear the crosses of life. But I say, learn something well. Waste not your time in idle reading, for a great writer says that no time is spent with less thought than great part of that which is spent in reading. He means of course what are called books and papers of amusement. He wrote above a hundred years ago: what would he say if he lived now?

As a man cannot always be busy with serious things, he may be allowed to amuse himself sometimes, but if he is wise, he will not indulge too much in what is called light reading, so called, I suppose, because it may be read without the trouble of thinking. Some of this kind of reading is however far from being light work. It can be managed by boys, who read anything, just as they can eat all kinds of rubbish, which a full grown man rejects. Young women have a mighty appetite for tales and novels, and they can find storing room for any amount of improbable fiction. If this is not one of the reasons for the undoubted fact of the great feebleness of most women, I am much mistaken.

I have somewhere read of a traveller who spent years in visiting different parts of the world, that he might have a stock of experience and recollections to feed on when he was old. Those who cannot travel when they are young must lay up a stock of matter by reading and talking with those

who can tell them something worth knowing. A man should live when he is young, as if he were some day to be old. If he does not reach old age, he will still have employed his time well; and if he does live to be old, what a dreary time it will be for him if his mind is a blank. It will be too late then to do what he might have done earlier. Old age is often solitary. The wife or the husband is dead; children, if there have been any, may be dead too or far away, and man or woman may be left nearly alone to pass a cheerless existence of many years, which can only be made tolerable by having some occupation or some pursuit which shall lighten the heavy hours. The best occupation, I mean the best for the man who is occupied, is to be doing something if he can which shall be useful to everybody, and that will of course be useful to himself. If he cannot be useful to others, he must be content with looking after himself; and some intellectual occupation will save him from that living death which is the life of an old age without good letters.

Wealth alone cannot give comfort in old age. It may bring occasional visitors who will eat and drink and go away. It may buy the services of domestics, but it cannot buy their affection. A rich old man who has no occupation but that of increasing his wealth runs great risk of sinking into imbecility, of which we have notable examples.

My young pupil then must not think of more

than a decent provision for his old age. But how much must it be? I cannot exactly tell. That will depend somewhat on his habits and what he has been used to. But if he has any pursuits which will fully occupy him and a few friends to talk to, I can tell him that a very small income will be enough.

Some men begin life with a steady purpose to be rich, and if they get their money honestly, they certainly do better than those who have no object at all in life. A life without an object is the life of a beast. The money-maker has a pleasure in his money, and he may continue this enjoyment as long as he lives, with this warning that if he loves his gold over much, he may become a despicable fellow, or turn crazy, a calamity against which a man who exercises his understanding on other objects is quite secure, if he does not carry his labours to the bounds of intemperance: for there may be intemperance even in the best things.

There is still another purpose for which people scrape together wealth without being very avaricious. They wish to leave a fortune to their children, and sometimes to found a family, as it is termed, and even to decorate it with a title. When we see how often that which the father has got together with so much pains is squandered by an unworthy son, I do not think that it is a great encouragement to fathers to work hard and

to save in order that sons may spend ; but it is done and will be done in spite of my advice. Nor do I recommend fathers to leave large fortunes to daughters, for this is often only a way of finding some worthless husband the means of gratifying his love of extravagant living. A wise man can discover no reasons for and he may discover many reasons against relieving his sons from the labour of working for their living. I might also urge the Christian precept of not laying up treasures on earth, a precept most positive and continually enforced by excellent reasons ; but I have never yet observed that this precept is respected in the slightest degree, except where it is enforced by the law.

I cannot view a life spent in the acquisition of wealth, a life of which wealth is the direct and ruling purpose as anything but an existence wasted and thrown away. Everybody knows that of all the passions that man has, the love of money, simply the love of possessing, is the strongest. It is cruel, inflexible : it hardens the heart, and deadens the understanding. It is the most merciless of tyrants to the possessor and to everybody else. As to those who are greedy of money in order that they may enjoy what they call pleasure, that is a different passion. It is the love of sensual pleasure, which money will buy ; and as such people must enjoy and will enjoy, they will do it at the expense either of friends or enemies.

These are the wild beasts of society, whom we have so much trouble to keep down. Of them I shall only observe that we shall handle them much more roughly, when we have learned better the due proportions between crime and punishment.

I am going to try to search to the bottom of a matter which concerns everybody. A man's thoughts are fashioned in a great degree by those about him, and those among whom he lives. He forms certain notions of the way of living from what he sees and hears of those with whom he associates, and also from what he may see and hear of those with whom he does not associate, but would associate with them very gladly if he could. Now most people will only associate with those whom they call their equals, and they would gladly move about among those who think themselves their superiors. But what is that which determines equality or superiority in our society? It is externals, house, dress, way of living, number of servants and the like. It is that which wealth enables a man to surround himself with. Accordingly we hear people talk in this fashion. How much must a man have by the year to make a proper appearance and maintain his social position? This is said with reference to marriage, for a bachelor may live on a very small income and still be received into the circle of gentility. He must dress as well as the rich man who entertains him, and indeed he generally

dresses better, for he who is really rich has the privilege of doing as he likes. The bachelor must put a good part of his income on his back, if he would maintain the place which circumstances have given him. But when he comes to the marriage question, things change. There is a certain income without which he cannot encounter matrimony, and the amount of this income depends in a measure on the means of those with whom he has been accustomed to associate. So if he and his partner together cannot bring their money up to the mark, they must renounce the partnership and the pleasures of the proposed union. If he has to deal with a money-loving father, I pity the poor man. He will be asked what he can settle, and I think as things go now, the women too have a pretty sharp eye for the business part of the matrimonial engagement. If they have lived in a good house, dressed well and moved in a select circle, as it is called, they are not ready to give up all this even for a good husband, with whom they must live in a different style from what they have been used to. If they like the externals and the show better than the possession of a worthy man as a husband, by all means let them remain in their single blessedness, if it is such.

I have a word to say to old gentlemen who have daughters and money. I say to them, if you have a grain of sense, marry your daughter to an honest worthy man, of good life and conversation,

one who is labouring to live by some honest industry. If you are the indefinite thing called a gentleman, I will admit your apology, if you will not let your daughter marry a man who is defiled by his occupation, however honest, and sensible and well bred he may be. I will suppose the man, for example, to have an occupation, which is inconsistent with being a gentleman, as the word is vulgarly understood—I hardly dare descend to particulars—but I will: I will suppose for example that he has something which may be a shop, where he sells something which people want. If such a man should happen to be the best and bravest gentleman in the country, I will excuse the father, if he rejects him with disdain, even if his daughter does not. But there still remains a large class of poor gentlemen among whom he may find a husband for his daughter. I don't mean poor gentlemen who do not work or cannot work. I mean poor gentlemen who are willing and able to work and are doing uses in the world. I recommend rich fathers to give their daughters to these gentlemen and to no others. Of course I know that my recommendation will be useless, but I give the advice, and if they are not wise enough to take it, they may let it alone.

As to those who are rich and nothing more, my advice is very short. Secure a gentleman, a real gentleman, a poor one of course, for your daughter, if you can, and feel very much obliged

to him for the honour which he confers on both of you.

I cannot suppose that my pupil will conclude that I advise him to hunt after a rich wife. This supposition would be entirely contrary to all my precepts. He must not look after such a wife at all. If chance should throw such an opportunity in his way, let him look well before he swallows the gilded bait. A man who shall marry a woman only because she is rich is no pupil of mine. If he can love and esteem her for her noble qualities in spite of the disadvantage of being rich, he may if he is sure of the purity of his own motives venture on such an alliance, on one condition that he shall still work and make himself useful. But the rule for him is the ancient rule, above two thousand years old, to marry according to your station, which ought to mean your externals, and also what Swedenborg calls your interiors, your real self, your knowledge, your thoughts, your principles of life. Finally, without any disparagement of the many women of rank or wealth or both, who adorn their station, I affirm that now at least an educated gentleman may find women equal to any in the country among those who live after his own fashion, and for that very reason better wives for him than those who have lived in a fashion, in which he has not lived, and ought not to wish to live. The best part of England is made up of men who work at something daily,

and I advise all men to seek a wife who is willing and able to do the work which is proper to her sex. If she does not do that, she will only be a burden to the working partner, and the more energy and manly vigour there is in the husband's character, the less will be the love and respect which he will finally show her.

Now I come to my point. I am addressing myself to a numerous class of well educated men, who follow some profession or occupation, or whatever you choose to call it. I have already in a manner told you that you must be married, as the Roman censor told his people. It is a matter of necessity. I am speaking of course in the general. Some few may have no inclination to marry, and fortunately there is nothing to force their inclination. The state allows them to be unproductive citizens, and I do not know whether bachelors are subject to any tax now. If I were disposed to digress, I would consider the question, whether the chancellor of the exchequer should tax bachelors or not, but I leave him to settle that matter. I have said that men must marry, and I prove the necessity by the fact that most of them do marry.

They are comparatively poor, as I assume ; they are not rich enough to circulate among those who are richer and to live like them. What must they do then ? Why, it is very plain. If they can live comfortably on a small income, if they can

obtain all that a reasonable man really wants, pursue their occupation, read some good books, enjoy the company of their wives, and of a few friends as well educated as themselves and no richer, what more do they want?

It is plain to any man that in this country people cannot associate with any pleasure, whose manner of living is entirely different. The rich live as they choose. Let them live so, and do you do the same; and seek not to know more of them, unless you happen to have some friends among the rich who have as much sense and good breeding as yourself, and who shall consider your acquaintance or friendship worth having, which will be a proof that theirs is worth having too.

What does an educated man, whose mind is well stored with knowledge, whose habits are simple and cheap, what does he seek by going among those who are richer than himself and live in luxury, clothed in fine linen and faring sumptuously every day? I ask what does he seek? Does he expect to find men of higher acquirements, better character, more generous and elevated thoughts? I think not. If he does, he will not find them. He will find in the society of those who do not labour in any way, the most idle frivolity, the emptiest heads, arrogance to those below, and servility to those above them. When we find a man of rank or wealth, or both, who has some good object in life and a cultivated mind,

we shall also find a man of simple tastes, and one well adapted to be a good companion and friend. But even in this case the externals do separate the rich and the poor gentleman, and it is a rare chance which brings them together as friends.

My young pupil then, who is an honest, industrious, educated gentleman, will be taught that he must get his living in some fair way, and seek for his associates among men in the same condition as himself. He will be saving, and prudent, and out of his little he will put by as much as he will want if he reaches old age. He will follow his tastes for literary or scientific pursuits, so far as his time will allow ; and if he shall gain his livelihood by such pursuits as a teacher or a writer, he will make them the business, and they will be the pleasure of his life, his comfort in prosperity and adversity. He will live happy and he will die contented. He will have lived for useful purposes, and he may be remembered in after ages as one of those who have made their own happiness and done something for others too.

But I must settle this matter with Montesquieu, or the reader will think that I am one of those writers who forget what they are about. When Montesquieu said that he should never have been consoled for not having made a fortune if he was born in England, we must remember that he was born in France, and in the South of France, and he could not tell what he would have thought if

he had been an Englishman. Many Englishmen have not made fortunes, though they could have made them, if money-making had been the object of their life. Are they all inconsolable? I hope not. I can answer for myself. I suppose he saw or thought that he saw that a man in England wanted more money than in France to make life pleasant or even tolerable; and that was true then, and may be true even now, if a man lives in Montesquieu's country. But there are parts of France now and a large part in which a man will find that he requires nearly as much as in England; not quite as much, because French habits and way of living are on a cheaper scale than ours, and to some people's tastes more agreeable. In France in his day a man of letters, or a gentleman by birth and descent had a position, as we call it, which pleased him. He was a gentleman, and nobody denied it. If he was poor, and some of the nobles before the Revolution were too poor to keep a horse, still he was proud or vain of his supposed superiority, and pride and vanity consoled a Frenchman for many privations. It is hardly so now, for rank is nothing in France and riches are the object of pursuit, and will become more so, the richer France becomes, and the fewer shall we have of those noble-minded Frenchmen of former days, who with some faults possessed great virtues. I think that Montesquieu saw that rank was nothing in England without wealth, that a

man must be rich as well as noble to command respect. I do not know whether he meant in the passage quoted in the last chapter that the English esteem either wealth or merit separately, or that they require both before they give their esteem. Like many other smart sayings, that of Montesquieu has some truth in it, but it is probable that he himself never took the pains to analyse exactly his own thoughts, but I will do it for him, having by long practice become expert at this mental dissection. The English are supposed to be great worshippers of rank and of people in high stations ; and it is true ; but the worshippers do require their idol to be decent. He must not have great vices, or at least they must not be notorious. But he is not required to have great virtues or great merit. If he has rank, he must not be poor, and the richer he is, the more he is esteemed ; I mean he has all the esteem which those who esteem him are capable of feeling. Rank simply in itself is in no way esteemed by those whom we call the lower classes. I am sure of that, for I have long observed their opinions on these matters. With them wealth or the appearance of wealth commands respect. They know the value of money well : they know the power of wealth, and in their eyes wealth is rank. If title is added, the thing is certainly made no worse ; perhaps a trifle better, but wealth is the idol that they worship. Their betters, the middle classes and the upper,—I

am obliged to write as people talk—may have a little respect for a poor noble, but it is not much. To be a proper object of adoration he must be rich.

If anybody shall deny the truth of what I say, I say that he does not know England. After all this, there is something to say on the other side. The most ignorant and the poorest can and do distinguish between a vulgar, ill-bred rich man, and a rich man who behaves like a gentleman. Virtue, merit, are not required in the rich man, but he must not behave as a poor man often does. He may be proud and haughty. No harm in that. It often passes for dignity. But he must not be coarse and vulgar like his worshipper, for surely the poor man has sense enough not to worship a man like himself.

The better sort of us, I hope, I mean those whose minds are cultivated, would value a rich man much more, if he had merit: if he were a man of science, a scholar, a useful member of the legislature, or known in any way for the possession of superior intellectual powers and great acquirements. But if a man is poor, if he is not able by reason of the cost, to mingle much with the richer sort, I cannot promise him much respect or esteem from people generally. The first inquiry about a man either directly or indirectly is, what is the state of his purse. I have discovered an excellent thing for poor men, and I will tell them something which is worth more than the cost of this book.

I assume that you wish to be respected and esteemed, that your happiness consists largely in what other men think and say of you, that you live in other men's opinions, contrary to the advice of the wisest philosophers of antiquity, in fine that you are a very incomplete man. I am sorry that you are, but I cannot mend you. Now I have discovered that for your purpose the next thing to being rich is to be thought so; and it may be managed in this way very well, without breaking any of the Ten Commandments. Live below your income, or, if you cannot do that, not above it. Never borrow money. If ever you are in want of money for a time, let nobody know it, not even your best friend, for I hope you know by this time that those whom a man calls his friends do him more mischief than his enemies. This suggests to me that I may write a chapter on Friendship, not quite the same as Cicero's Treatise; but I do not promise. Pay ready-money for everything, which is the best plan; or if you cannot do that, pay bills punctually. Let not a man ask you for his money more than once, and better not to wait till you are asked to pay. As to your style of living that is not of any importance. Your dress should be decent and always clean: nothing more. At first your tradesmen and neighbours will suppose that you are poor; in a short time, they will say that you must be in easy circumstances; lastly you will be called rich, and at the same time

rather fond of money, rather close-fisted : but you must not care for that. Put that slight imputation on your character in the balance against the opinion of your wealth, and it will be nothing. Finally, to prove what a good opinion your friends have of you, they will borrow your money, and if you do not lend, they will not like you ; and if you do lend and they never repay you, they will hate you ; and if you dun them for the money, they will be your mortal enemies : and so as I have given a direct absolute precept about borrowing, you may deduce for yourself a practical rule about lending, and you may perhaps find that the rule is not absolute, but still nearly so.

Now every prudent man, I say every honest man, for no man is honest who spends more than his income, may obtain a little respect by following my rule. If he has any real merit of any kind, men's esteem will be increased, if he is supposed not to be poor. If he borrows, or practises fraud of any kind, such as making debts which he cannot pay, he will lose all esteem, even if he were the wisest man in the world. In this matter opinion is severe and just.

To conclude, if you are rich, you will be respected, perhaps esteemed, provided you live a decent life. You will not be expected to show great virtues ; but you must not have great and notorious vices. If you are not rich, but merely supposed to be, or to be at your ease, you will do

very well, and you will receive a certain amount of external respect in the addresses on your letters, the touching of hats, and even dinners occasionally and invitations to festive meetings. I forgot to say that you must subscribe to something sometimes; but pray be careful that you lay your gifts out well. A little well given, in the proper time and place, will do more for you than much careless giving. If you have merit, if you have a few friends who acknowledge it, if the public who know you not except by something that you have done, shall have a good opinion of you, that may be some comfort; for though a man must not seek good opinion as the direct object, he cannot, he ought not to undervalue it, if it follows upon honest and useful labour. Perhaps you may ask, How I am to know that I have merit? and may I not have merit, and yet not all the esteem that I deserve or desire? I answer that your question proves that you do not understand the matter. If you have real merit you will know it, and if you have not real merit, you may think that you have it and you will desire the esteem, which you do not deserve. It is a case past my cure, and I believe it is nearly incurable; and that is all that I can say. Real merit of necessity, by virtue of the notion itself, implies modesty and a consciousness of itself; and a man's consciousness of his own integrity, his honest purpose, his labor to attain a good end,

and some success in the attempt is a better reward than the opinion of others. If it were not, tell me what would be the use of that which we call Conscience.





OF STATUES.

THE reason why I have a chapter on Statues is this. I am writing of human life and what must and what may happen to man. As certain as it is that out of a large number of people some one or more will be hanged, so certain is it that out of some number greater or less some one or more after death will have a statue. It is in the nature of things that statues should be made. They were made more than two thousand years ago, and I believe the business has never stopped, for when people could not get good statues, they were content with bad, as we are now.

At present a bronze statue costs a good round sum, and yet I am told that the money allowed to the artist is generally insufficient to enable him to produce an excellent work; and this may be true, for I do not think so meanly of our men as to suppose that they have yet done their best.

The time may come when we shall find out some way of making statues of cheaper materials than metal. Perhaps we shall make them of paper. That will be a glorious time. We shall all have our statues, living or dead; and we shall not be plagued with these periodical demands for subscriptions to statues of men whom we never saw, do not care for and are glad to forget. If I might give a word of advice to the men now living, who look forward to the honor, if it is an honor, of being set up in bronze in the highways, or in marble in Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's; if I might advise, I would say, leave a legacy in your will for your own statue. It will save much trouble and people will think better of you when you are gone, if you cost them nothing. As to their laughing at you for looking after your own statue, be not afraid of that. There is good classical example for providing by will for your own monument; and if a man does really expect or fear that he must after death stand in public to be gazed at, rained on, or perchance spit on, it will be the best thing to empower his executor to look after this matter, to pay the artist well and to escape from the taste of a committee. The Romans when they set up a public statue did it in this fashion in Cicero's time. Servius Sulpicius, a great jurist and an honest man, died on a mission in the camp near Mutina. His friend Cicero pronounced his panegyric in the senate and

moved that a bronze statue of Servius should be placed on the Rostra. The consuls were empowered to instruct the city quaestors, the lords of the treasury, to make a contract for the statue and to pay the artist. There was no sum fixed in the terms of Cicero's motion. Both the money and the choice of the artist appear to have been left to the quaestors, and it is very likely that when they had found their man, they let him have his own way, and did not higggle about statue or pedestal, as our statue jobbers sometimes do.

As in all things so in this there are degrees. Some men have been imbronzed during their life time, have actually seen themselves bestriding horses, brazen men on brazen horses. But this is rare. Others must wait till they are dead, but they may enjoy the statue by anticipation, and be comforted by the prospect of their immortality in bronze or marble; if in no other way. Some men must be content with a marble bust, and they may get that in their life time, either by hiring a man to make it, or by the kind attention of friends. In fact they may sometimes get it made for nothing, if their name is up in the market; and they may see themselves multiplied in plaister. Plaister is very useful in this way. We see in the big glass house near London many plaister busts of the illustrious dead and some of the not illustrious living; but it is hard to understand how these busts found their way

there, unless the living originals sent them. After a careful inspection of these plaister heads, I conclude that some of them were not placed there for their beauty, and that others have been admitted merely that the pedestals may not be vacant. Perhaps they may some time have to make way for heads that have something in them; but in the meantime we may take it for granted that as long as there is room, any face is welcome there.

I do not know who first made a statue of a man, nor do I care. The Egyptians began this business a long time ago. They made statues of their gods, and statues of their kings, which possibly had some resemblance to the originals. They made the stone very smooth, and some of their statues very big, but the attitudes were awkward and stiff, and they certainly did not represent the beauty of the human form. I see no reason for supposing that the Greeks took the hint from the Egyptians, though their oldest statues had something of the Egyptian character. However, be this as it may, which is I believe the proper phrase to help us out of a difficulty, if they did begin by making statues like the Egyptian, they ended by making them like men and women.

The Greeks began by making statues of their deities who fortunately for art were only men and women, and they began early. He who wrote the

Iliad or the sixth book must have seen a seated statue of Athene, for he describes the Trojan women laying a handsome shawl on the knees of the goddess in her temple. My business is not to write the history of sculpture, and for a very good reason, which I need not mention. I stick to my subject, which is statues of men set up in public places. After making gods the Greek artist came to making heroes. I suppose everybody knows that these heroes were not modern heroes. They were founders of states or colonies, or men who had done great deeds, and to be made a hero in those days was like being made a saint now, for saint-making is not ended yet. We read of one Philippus of Croton, an adventurer, who fell in battle in Sicily. He was the comeliest of all the Greeks of his age, and the people of Segeste built an heroum or monument over his burial place and offered sacrifices to him. I suppose that he had a statue as other heroes certainly had.

I do not know whether Phidias or his workmen made any effigies of men or women besides those that we see in the metopes and friezes of the Parthenon, nor have I yet discovered when the Greeks began to set up statues of statesmen, soldiers and poets. Cicero mentions a statue at Himera in Sicily of the poet Stesichorus, who lived in the seventh century before the Christian aera; but it is certain that this statue was set up a long time after the age of Stesichorus; just as if

we were now to set up a statue of John Milton in London in place of some statue of somebody whom nobody knows and nobody looks at. Cicero who had a taste tells in few words how Stesichorus was represented. It was the figure of an old man, bent with age, with a book in his hand, and the workmanship was supposed,—this is Cicero's assumed modest way of giving his opinion—to be most excellent. There is extant a coin of Himera on which this statue is represented, the bald, stooping old man Stesichorus, resting on a strong staff and reading in a roll. The Greek cities contained statues of their founders and of their illustrious citizens, and of their deities. Time and barbarism have left us little of Grecian art, but we now and then light on a few coins, which preserve a faint image of some of the great works of antiquity, and our artists might learn something from them. It is very disagreeable now-a-days to see a man standing for ever on his legs in public, doing nothing but stand, and seeming as if he were never going to do anything else. Stesichorus, as you see, was very well employed ; we may be sure that he was reading a good book, perhaps his own poems, and so we feel no concern for him, knowing that he will never be tired. If a man shall try to persuade me that a statue should be nothing more than the effigy of a man standing on a pedestal, I shall never be convinced. I would rather see a living man standing on an inverted cask, as I have

seen a slave when he was sold, not that the sale is a very pleasant thing to see, but the man produced a much better effect than many of our statues, for he expressed something and they express nothing.

When the Greeks did begin to set up statues, they went on at a great rate. I have not made a list of all the statues which are mentioned in ancient books. I have not time for that nor inclination either. I recommend the subject to learned men, of whom there are now so many that I fear they will hardly have the opportunity of showing off their learning, unless somebody cuts out work for them, as I hope to do. I intreat the man who shall be so lucky as to seize my hint first and thus secure an immortal remembrance by making a catalogue, I intreat him to note down, so far as it can be done, all that he can discover of the style and manner of these statues. Many of them were bad enough, as we know from existing samples; but there were good statues too. The Romans followed the Greeks, and we follow the Romans. There was a perfect rage for statues among the Romans. Men had them in their life time set up in public. They had the bad taste to dress them sometimes in a Greek costume. L. Scipio, who conquered Antiochus the great, was placed in the Roman capitol in a Greek dress and Greek shoes. We sometimes wrap a statue up in something like a blanket, which the artist I suppose would call a Roman toga. On this matter I shall lay down one

invariable rule : either show your gentleman stark naked, or dress him like a decent Christian man. The Romans set up a naked statue of M. Vipsanius Agrippa, the friend of Augustus, and his great admiral. But the statue was colossal, and Agrippa was a deified hero. When we have a man like him, we may treat him in the same fashion. Britannia's god of war is put on the top of a pillar, as far out of the way as possible : I mean the little man who smote the Gaul at the Nile and again at Trafalgar. I do not mean the big man who is exposed to lasting contempt on a pillar's top by his friends, his worst enemies.

Of course you cannot present your gentleman stark naked, unless he was a pattern of perfect beauty, for everybody knows that statues were not made naked for any other reason than to show the perfection of the human form. Nor do we put men in bronze or marble for their beauty, but for something else, and so it matters not whether they were well or ill made ; and this brings me to the important conclusion, that as we cannot or at least ought not to make our statues naked or blanket-dressed, and as body and legs are merely given to a statue in order to support the head, for the legs and body might be any legs and any body, would it not be wise to be satisfied with the head only ? This would be a great saving, and though the sculptor would get less for a head than for a head with body and legs to it, he would have more heads

to make. This is a hint, which I throw out by the way, for the consideration of committees who sit on statues, by which I mean men who sit together to talk about a thing of which most of them know nothing.

A good bust of a fine head is really a good thing, and I suppose that a sculptor of sense would rather be employed on making good busts, if he could do it, than on making bad statues. Still I know that people will not be satisfied with busts, even if they should be made as well as the best busts of the Roman time, and we have not equalled them yet. People will have the whole man, and I agree with them, if we can have him made well, and looking as if he were alive. Though a head may be a fine work, it is certainly awkward when a long row of them is stuck on pedestals, or when they are put on shelves like earthen pots, as in former days I have seen them at the annual exhibitions at the National Gallery. The bust is also only suited for the inside of a building or for some exterior ornamentation (I hope that is the right word), but a statue will do anywhere, if there is room enough for it.

I shall therefore allow the making of statues to go on, because I cannot stop it, and I shall only require them to be properly dressed; and if I cannot enforce that rule, I shall take my revenge by not looking at them, and advising other people to do the same, though I believe there is no occasion

to give this advice, for nobody does look at our bronze statues unless they are so placed that you have a chance of running against them. What is the reason that people in London pass some of these things continually and do not look at them? Is it because they are black or ugly or both, or is it because familiarity breeds contempt, as the copy-books used to say? Unlike some people who ask questions in their books and leave them unanswered, I shall answer mine.

First then I say that to most of our people in their present aesthetical or unaesthetical condition it matters not what an outdoor statue is like. They can do very well without it; and if it must be had, they are easily satisfied. You may make your statue's legs like wooden posts painted black, make his breeches fit tight to the posts, put him on a decent black coat and let him stand bare-headed doing nothing. Now as to the blackness, and blackness in a black climate, is that anything but one of the forms of ugliness? especially if your statue is in such attitude and such a dress that there is a stiff hard outline. The Romans often, I do not say always, gilded their bronze statues, whether wholly or partially I do not know. It would require some skill to do this well, and it might be worth while trying the experiment. I am inclined to think that it might answer. Silanion made a curious experiment in his bronze statue of the dying Jocasta. He gave to the face

the appearance of a corpse by mixing some silver with the bronze. This is all that we are told, and we must understand it as we can. I doubt if we shall have anybody bold enough to try the experiment again. We may conclude so much as this from the story, that Silanion did not think that the color of bronze was suited to his work. Pliny says that Nero ordered an Alexander by Lysippus to be gilded, but that as the gilding spoiled the beauty of the work, it was taken off, and the statue was considered more valuable in this state, though the gilding still adhered to the damaged parts and to the deep cuttings. It is not said, as far as I can find, that Lysippus gilded any of his bronzes. He took great pains with all the details of his statues, such as the hair for instance, and we may infer that he gave them great relief, so that under a bright sun there would be light and shade, and the want of color would not offend. Perhaps too he mixed his material so that his bronze was not made black by exposure. I am sure that it was not made green, like some of our statues, which is perhaps the worst color for the purpose. He used to say that other artists made men just as they are, but he made them as they seemed to be; a remark which shows that he knew what he was about.

When the negroes of Africa have been brought to the same state of civilization as the white man, they will make statues and set them up in public ;

and as we who are white make black statues, they who are black will of course make white statues.

There is a statue in yellowish colored stone at the entrance of the Foundling Hospital, London, which both in color, attitude and costume satisfies the eye. I happened once to see this statue having lost my way in that dreary neighbourhood, where there is nothing but long lines of parallel tall walls pierced with holes called windows, and I rejoiced at my misfortune, for I came on something which I think of with pleasure. I have not asked the critics whether I am right or wrong in my judgment, and they may easily know why.

I conclude that if we had fine statues in our public places, people would look at them as often as they passed, and if a thing that is made to be looked at is not looked at, I ask triumphantly, what is the use of it?

Can anybody say what sin Dr. Jenner committed for which he does perpetual penance, not in white, but in black, his face black and his hands too, seated in the most public part of London, fixed to his chair, with no hope of rising from it? * Is this the man whose patient inquiries have well nigh rid us of a loathsome and fatal disease? I grant that he ought to have a memorial, if he needs one, though I am of Tacitus' mind that the

* Since this was written, I have been told that the Doctor has run away and hid himself, nobody knows where. Some say that he has taken to the woods and forests.

remembrance of a man's virtues is a better monument than his figure in bronze or marble; and Cicero said well when he told the Roman senate in his funeral oration on Sulpicius, that the life of the dead rests in the remembrance of the living. But a statue is not merely a memorial: it is or should be a work of art on which we may look with pleasure. This seated figure might be anybody. I see nothing by which I recognize Dr. Jenner; to say nothing of a cow, there is not even a calf by his side, with the benevolent physician's hand on the animal. Perhaps the artist had not Myron's skill, who made in bronze a living heifer. I propose to the sculptors as a problem, what is the best way of treating a statue of Jenner, for I cannot solve it myself, though I am sure that a statue of a great man should give some indication of what he was.*

Lysippus made a bronze statue of Alexander with a spear in his hand, and the face looking up, which was the king's fashion, for he always carried his neck a little on one side. Some man made an inscription for the statue, which is not amiss; and it runs thus in Greek as it does here in English:

Looking to Zeus the bronze appears to say,
I make the earth my own, keep thou Olympus.

The artist was rewarded by a patent which gave him the privilege of making the busts and statues of king Alexander.

* See E. Davis' statue of Wedgewood.—Ed.

If I say that a statue should be doing something, I say true. If he is only standing or only sitting, he is doing nothing. He may be thinking either standing or sitting; and then he is doing something. A Greek athlete who was sitting quiet, was resting; and the artist could show the beauty of the human form in a state of repose. But our out-door statues either standing or sitting are not intended to display the form. They are intended to show—but I stop, for I do not know what they are intended for, except it may be that the face is some likeness to the original, and the attitude and dress indicate in some manner the man's profession. I may have missed the exact purpose or intention in these things. If I have, I ask pardon for presuming to try to find it out.

I cannot approve of a seated black statue in the open air—a black man sitting, and no more. I am aware that the ancient artists did make seated statues, but then I reply that there are things in which we had better not imitate them, and I also reply that they could do these things better than we can. I also know that Michael Angelo made a noble seated figure of Giuliano de' Medici for a monument, and in something like a Roman military dress, which was nothing extravagant at that time; and if anybody can do anything like it now, I wish that he may be employed to do it. But I sincerely pity our seated gentlemen in London, poor Cartwright, who looks like an old cobbler on

his stool, and Fox, worse treated still, blanket-dressed, fat and black. No wonder some short-sighted man from the now Confederate States once took Fox for a negro woman, the emblem of British philanthropy and a memorial of the abolition of the slave trade.

The Greeks, who did not do everything well, once seated Europa on a bull. We may have something like the original in a mean copy, which you may see in some books. I suppose the bull would be somewhat conventional, as they term it. At any rate he would not be an English bull, but a milder animal of the southern breed. I think we could not venture to put Dr. Jenner either on a bull or a cow, though his fame is as closely bound to this quadruped as that of our lady Europa. A modern artist has placed Ariadne on a conventional tiger or leopard, all naked, and by no means in a comfortable position. We give the sculptor credit for great skill, but none for taste. At least I do not. A naked woman in an almost impossible attitude on an impossible beast, standing still, is the oddest combination of absurdity that can be imagined. We allow art a wide range when it can produce something beautiful, but there is a limit to the range. The Greeks had a bronze Aphrodite seated on a bronze he-goat ; but there was a mystery in that, which I shall not unveil. In the British Museum there is a coin of Sybrita, an unknown town of Crete, which shows us how

a man of taste could treat his subject. On one side is a figure of Hermes stooping to put on his shoes. On the other a woman is seated on an animal, tiger or leopard, or something of the kind, though it is neither. She has one hand on the neck and in the other a thyrsus. She sits upright, bare to the waist: the drapery is well fixed round her middle, and hangs down leaving her feet free. The beast is galloping at a great rate, but the woman is so firmly placed that you are not afraid of her coming off. She sits well like a good rider. This is one of the most beautiful specimens of ancient art, and it may be a copy of some basso-relievo.

The only beasts on which we can now place our heroes are horses. I may be wrong in my opinion, but I see no beauty in a horse standing still and a man's legs dangling down from the beast's back; nor do I think that the matter is mended by the horse and rider being of colossal size, though they ought to be larger than life. Perhaps we shall not have any more of these statues; but is it impossible to remove those that we have?

I have a word more about statues standing on lofty pillars. It is a consolation that they must by the very nature of the case be rare; and it is most fortunate that we see very little of them, except at a distance; and this is really the best position from which we can view them.

We in this country have not yet attempted

colossal figures, and we have done right. They are very expensive, very difficult to make, and it is difficult also to find a place for them. Instead of any more columns tipped with statue let us make a colossal Britannia, if we want something big, first however securing a proper place for her who rules the waves. I recommend the heights above Dover for her ladyship's residence, whence she can command a view of the sea, and of the only country from which her bold children fear invasion. The statue might have a good effect in many ways: it might frighten the French away by its calm and noble attitude, if it were such as Lysippus or Chares could have made; or, if like the colossal horse and rider of London, it might frighten them off by mere force of ugliness. The committee which shall undertake this job (I am not speaking of a job in the wicked sense; far be that intention from me) will of course know that the statue must be as big as that which Zenodorus made of Mercury for the people of Clermont in Auvergne, though the place was named Gergovia then. How this statue was paid for, I never could conjecture. The artist was ten years over it. Zenodorus was afterwards honoured by a commission from Nero to make his imperial majesty's colossal statue one hundred and ten feet high; and he made it. Pliny tells us all this. Zenodorus beat all his predecessors in the bigness of his figures; and that is something. It is like

the big book merit. If you cannot make a book or a statue as good as your predecessors, you ought to make them bigger, and in that department of art, the size, we could surpass all antiquity.

Women are rather shabbily treated in the matter of statues. They are allowed to have busts, but only queens may have public statues. I suppose all women may have a statue at home, if they will pay for it. But why should not some women have statues as well as some men? I know the answer, but I am not satisfied with it. The Romans placed statues of women in the open air, and even women on horseback. The Roman girl who swam the Tiber and escaped from the Tuscan camp in which she was a hostage, was immortalized by an equestrian statue on the top of the Sacra Via. The story is strange enough, and it is told by the learned Dionysius with some curious variations. A good critic of course knows that it is all a lie; and the story of the statue too. Dionysius, who went about like our archaeologists to look for confirmations of old stories, never saw the statue and he was told that it perished in a fire in that quarter of the city. I am sorry for it, but it proves that the fame of man or woman may last longer than a monument in bronze.

Cornelia, the daughter of him who conquered Hannibal, the wife of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, an honest and wise man, the mother of two

reforming sons, who had the usual fate of reformers, had a bronze statue set up for her with the inscription, Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi. I am not in favour of setting up in public the statue of a woman only because she has produced illustrious sons, for that is a matter which does not depend on her will; but if a woman has had illustrious sons and helped to make them such, as Cornelia did, I think that she is as worthy of a monument as her sons. Has England never produced a woman, other than a queen, who is worthy to be honoured in bronze or stone at the public cost? The French have their Jeanne d'Arc, whom the English burnt alive, and Jeanne will never be forgotten. We might find one without much difficulty, not a fighting woman, but one who had all Jeanne's courage and a good deal more sense.

The Greeks kept their women out of the way as much as they could. Pericles in his famous speech on those who fell in the war, or Thucydides writing for him, tells the women to stay at home and that the less they are talked of, the better. This man was evidently no friend to female emancipation, to female statues, or to female voting at elections. The ladies who did attain the distinction of a statue among the Greeks after Pericles' time were noted for other things than careful housekeeping. Praxiteles made a marble statue of the beautiful Phryne and placed it near

one of marble also which he made of Aphrodite, a goddess and his mistress keeping company. He also made another statue of Phryne, gilded, and the woman thought that she could not dispose of it better than by sending it to Delphi, the head quarters of religion in those days.

Silanion made a statue of the Theban poetess Corinna, and another of the Lesbian Sappho. Silanion was an Athenian, a contemporary of the great Alexander and of Lysippus, and accordingly we see that Sappho's statue was not made in her native country and not till centuries after her death. The Syracusans, it seems, bought it, for Cicero saw it in the town hall of Syracuse. Verres, the greatest thief on record, the Governor of Sicily, fell in love with Sappho and carried her off; and Cicero says that the theft was almost excusable, so beautiful was the statue. We cannot suppose that it was a likeness, but the artist did his duty by putting the poetess in a perfect form. The statue has perished, but the fame of Sappho lives in her own immortal verse. We shall never see Sappho. Let no man be so rash as to show us a counterfeit.

I doubt if our women will ever attain the distinction of a public statue by their beauty, even if they should be as fair as the goddess whom Praxiteles made for the people of Cnidos, and pilgrims came from foreign lands to see her. We are far removed from the notions of the sensuous, I do

not say the sensual Greeks ; and to speak plainly, most of us know as little of what is beautiful as a blind man knows of color. Our women must attain statue-honours by great virtues and noble deeds, and they must be content with such statues as we are able to make of them. In the present state of affairs, and seeing what has been done in this way for queens, I must recommend committees to stay their hand and not allow any sculptor to make any more. If the man exists who can do the thing, and I believe that he does, I can assure them that they will not find him out.

As we are a fighting people, we have been great makers of statues of fighting men. We put them even in churches. This reminds me that when the time shall come for finishing and adorning the inside of St. Paul's, there will be an enormous quantity of old stone to dispose of, which is now in the shape of generals, captains, admirals, lions and other animals. As to Westminster Abbey perhaps we must wait till the Archbishop of Westminster gets possession of it, when I promise you there will be a clearing out of this Augean stable, and we shall see the old building in all its beauty. If there is anything among the stone work called statues worth keeping, and there may be, a suitable place will be found for it in the Valhalla of British worthies, for which I am sure that our House of Commons will vote a few millions as readily as they vote

them for useless things. At present there is something of a reaction, as it is phrased. We are become quite pacific, and we shall no doubt make statues of peace-makers instead of peace-breakers. There is a chance for the quakers now, and perhaps William Penn may make his appearance in public some day in marble or bronze, since he has been cleared of the dirt which was lately cast on him. The intention no doubt was good, that the dirt should stick, but I don't believe that it will.

Our statues of fighting men are so tame and lifeless that we only know them to be fighting men because they have a fighting dress. I am tired of them, and I hope I may never look on them again. Why do we not make statues of real fighting men, as the Greeks did by hundreds? statues of running men, and great walkers, statues of wrestling men? Lysippus, who knew his business well, made statues both of kings and boxers. He made the famous statue at Olympia of Polydamas, the biggest and strongest man that had appeared since the time of Hercules. Polydamas killed a lion, like Hercules, which he met with in the forests of Olympus, and he killed it without any club, which is more than Hercules did.

It is singular, or it is not singular, I can't say which, that we who box, wrestle, run and in many ways work our bodies, more than any other modern nation, have not employed our sculptors to immortalize our athletic heroes. Some of them

would make good subjects for the artist. He might strip the boxer or runner naked, if he liked, and exhibit his art in the representation of strength and beauty of form. I have some misgivings about the faces of boxers, which are not remarkable for beauty, but the artist may improve them a little without destroying the likeness ; and besides, in a naked figure we look less at the face than at the body and limbs. The champion of England would certainly have had a statue by Lysippus or some artist as good, if he had been lucky enough to live in ancient times. There is authority, if it is wanted, for the treatment of such subjects, of representing a boxer in a fighting attitude, even if he is not fighting with anybody. We shall of course want a place to put these statues in, for we may be sure they will not get into the churches, which are only made for statues of fighting men who have killed somebody or ordered somebody to kill somebody. But we are rich enough to build a Pantheon for our athletes and to pay our artists to make their statues, and then shall we see who can make a statue. This will be a different kind of work from fudging up old generals in cloaks, boots and the like.

I could go on much longer, but I don't choose. I write to amuse myself, and also to instruct, and when I am tired, I stop. I see no reason why I should exhaust the subject. I should only be giving my ideas to people who have none, who

make a reputation out of other folks' brains, who pounce on anything that they find ready to their hand, and flood us with books made only to sell. These men shall have no statues, and as to their books, most of them will be buried before they are. They will hear more of this in my chapter Of Books.





OF STYLE.



MAN may wonder why this is one of my chapters, but if he will have a little patience, I will tell him. I am speaking of what we must do in this world after we have been brought into it without our consent: and this is the matter of my book. We must eat and drink and clothe ourselves, or our stay here will be very short. I was going to say that we must work too, but that would be a mistake, for I see a great many people who have never worked and never will work at all, and yet they go on living, which can only be explained by supposing that somebody is working for them, while they are idle. I cannot mention all that we must do, if we would live; and so I come at once to mention one thing that we must do, or one which at least we all do. All of us write. Everybody writes books now as they did at Rome in Horace's time, and what everybody does looks very

like something that everybody must do. Now if a man writes, he must know how to write: he must write in some way, and his way of writing, whether it is good or bad, I call his style; and I make this definition for my own use, and I do not ask the dictionary makers or the critics whether they like it or not.

When I was a little boy, England was much troubled about what was going on in France, where all the people went mad and began to lay about them as madmen do, knocking everything down that came in their way, and after they had done a good deal of this kind of work at home, they began to enter their neighbours' premises to look for more sport of the kind. John Bull who in those days was much readier at getting into a fray than finding his way out of it, was so delighted at what he saw that he stepped over the water to join in the fun, and a pretty heavy reckoning he had to pay for it. All this time nobody wrote anything except sermons and pamphlets, and as nobody read either of them, and there was nothing else to read, there were no readers; and it is a maxim in political economy, which some ingenious gentlemen have fully established after a great deal of labor, that if nobody wants a thing, nobody will make it. All this shows that we cannot absolutely affirm that man must make books, and if I have laid down this axiom a little too broadly at the beginning of this

chapter, what is said now will correct it. There still remains the question which I recommend philosophers to settle, whether man in a state of nature is a writing animal, and whether, if he is, his reading or his writing propensities are first in order of time, for as it has been shown, there can be no reading without writing, but there may be writing without reading, as some writers know to their cost.

Now that the great French war has long been over, and we have enjoyed peace for many years, with the exception of the constant wars that we carry on so far from home that we know nothing about them except that we pay for them ; and as England has recovered from her late fright and is protected by her volunteers and Armstrong guns, and by the forts which we are going to build with the perfect certainty that we shall never make any use of them ; as we are all safe and comfortable, and have nothing to do but to pay our taxes and amuse ourselves as well as we can, I foresee a prodigious increase in the business of writing, which is in a fair way to become one of our staple branches of industry, and probably may surpass the wonderful cotton trade. If we can get paper cheaper by the repeal of the paper duty, or get it for nothing, which is by no means impossible, every man, woman and child will write at least one book. Indeed the men and women have nearly done it already. The children's turn will

come next, and there is good reason for thinking that some of them have begun already, which is the only supposition that I can make as a sufficient explanation of many of the childish books that I see on the booksellers' counters, though it is true that children's names are not put to these books; which may be, for what I know, because a child cannot put his name to a book till he has attained the legal age of one and twenty. In the mean time the fathers and mothers father and mother their children's books; and this simple hypothesis makes all clear.

For all these reasons, seeing what is written and what will be written, I am going to tell everybody how to write, and I shall not be long about it.

The eloquent Buffon says that the style is the man, by which he means that we may know what the man is when we see his style. If this is true, every man should think well what he is before he begins to write, and whether it is wise to expose himself. It is true that nobody may read his book, and that is often the best luck that can befall him. But he may be reviewed without being read, and so get as roughly handled as if he fell among thieves who stripped him stark naked. Reviewers according to the laws of political economy must increase if authors increase, and as they must write, they will review books, and as everybody delights in seeing everybody

else well abused, reviewers must be sharp and witty at the cost of authors, or they will not be read themselves. However I have nothing to do with all this. It is my business to teach men to write, and not to look after them if they get into scrapes by it.

The first rule in good writing is to know what you are going to write about, a plain simple rule, but one that is very much neglected. If a man makes a good choice of his subject, he will not fail to have the best words at his command and to put all in the best order. So Horace says, and he may be right; but it strikes me that a man might choose a good subject and yet spoil it, of which we have notable examples in our own days. The Roman however also tells us that we must well consider what our shoulders will bear and what they will not; and so the rule is this: choose a good subject, if you are able to handle it. If you are not, need I tell you that you had better let it alone?

As for those unhappy people who must write before they eat, or eat on credit and then write to pay for what they have eaten, or eat at other folks' cost and then be called rascals and so forth if they cannot pay; I pity them sincerely and from the very bottom of my heart, which is the greatest depth of pity that language can express. I pity them, but I cannot help them, except these few words may be of some use. I

shall not scold them or abuse them or ridicule them, and I think they have pretty good security on this last head, when they see my style of writing; for it has just struck me that if what I have said is true (be true, if you prefer it, but I don't), I must have a style of writing myself. And if the reader will look at it and the unhappy writers of whom I am now speaking will consider it, they will see that I am of a mild gentle compassionate nature, ready to see things in the fairest light, to weep over the sufferings of all my brethren and to help them too as far as I can. All envy, hatred, malice and uncharitableness if I have not banished them from my heart, I have at least tried to do it, and with some success; and I am grateful to the Litany whenever I hear it read for reminding me of those abominable sins, which do more to make life miserable than all the earthquakes, tempests, fire, famine and pestilence that ever afflicted man. I wonder and the more I think the more I wonder, that many people hear these ugly things prayed against at least once a week and go on practising them just as much as those who never pray at all. I think I could explain the reason of this, and I am tempted to explain the reason, but I resist the temptation, for I fear to fall into one of those very sins which I am reproving.

My compassion then, my pity, my sympathy, my condolences are for and with those poor people

who write against their will and to get their daily bread. They can no more help it than a beggar's child can help being a beggar. There is no choice for them. How people have fallen into this unhappy condition, I cannot tell, but I have a suspicion that they are a little to blame for it themselves, while the beggar's child is not to blame for being a beggar or for begetting other beggars, and they others and so on; for is it not true that all things have their nature, and do they not follow their nature, and ought they not? and is it not of the nature of a beggar to beg and to teach his children to beg, and to live on the labor of others, even if he could work himself? and is it not of the nature of all things to produce their kind in a perpetual order, I mean what we call perpetual, which is for the short time that we watch things at their work, for it may be and I think it has been pretty nearly proved, as far as a thing can be proved which is incapable of proof, that first of all anything may come out of nothing, and next that in the course of what we call time, which is philosophically speaking in the course of nothing, anything may become any other thing and so on for ever.

But let me not forget the unhappy writers whom I have in hand. Let them console themselves with the reflection that, if they beget writing children which is certainly in the present order of nature, this order will not continue for ever; but

some day kind Nature, who by virtue of this capital letter is endowed with a new force and energy, will give birth in their descendants to new forms and new combinations, to children with big legs, broad shoulders, mighty fists, who will elbow and kick and fight and scramble their way out of the mire, knock down the descendants of those who are now called the great, win battles, gain kingdoms, seat themselves on thrones and be worshipped by those whom they have kicked and cuffed. Or unlike their poor dull fathers of this present day, they will be men with keen eyes, thin faces and sharp noses, perhaps big noses too, for there is something in a nose, men of clear heads and cold hearts, clever at figures, cool and given to reckoning well before they make a bargain; and they will gain countless gold by countless artful ways without breaking the law or failing in regular attendance at church, chapel or synagogue, or sending their families at least, like the good Sir Balaam; and they will sit with nobles and princes and kings, perhaps even dine with the Pope, if ever he gives dinners—marry and give in marriage to Jew and Gentile, wear coronets, make war and peace, lend to all nations who want to fight and want money to fight with, lend to both sides, if both can give security, or if they find the security not good enough for them, they will pass it on for a reasonable profit to those for whom it is good enough; they will live in luxury, in honor

and in glory, and they will die in peace and be buried with regal pomp. All these good things Nature may do, my poor fellows, for some of your descendants in the hundredth generation. Be comforted then with your lot, for though it will never mend, think of the good things which others may enjoy thousands of years hence ; and this is the consolation that I would give to all those too who live in miserable garrets, half naked and hungry, dirty and full of disease and suffering and wretchedness. There is a good time coming, and if it comes not to you, it will come to somebody else, and if that is not comfort, I have none to give.

I say then to all the poor fellows who write because they can't help it, get as much as you can for your work, and don't trouble yourselves whether it is worth the money or not. It is plain that somebody wants your work or you would not be paid for it. As to those who write nonsense and are well paid for it, I have nothing to say, except to hope that the public will sometime be wise enough to set the right value on their labor, which will be the shortest way of bringing them to their senses and stopping the effusion of ink. I say the same to those who have no excuse for writing, and do it out of mere wantonness. The power of much writing must be resisted by the power of little reading, which if well exercised will at last bring these gentlemen to reason.

This is a digression, and digressions or episodes are a part of style. I intended to treat of digressions at length and to give an example of one, and here it is. There are digressions or episodes in poems, in histories and in all kinds of composition, and why should there not be one in my book? I think that they produce a good effect. I have sometimes been vexed in reading a book to find that the author broke off his story or his discussion to introduce something which interrupted the regular discourse, but after getting fairly into the digression I found myself so much amused that I quite forgot all that had been said before, and was half vexed when the author resumed what is called the thread of his discourse. I have no fear that this will happen to my readers. They cannot forget what I have said, and they will be glad to know that I am beginning my work again.

I must however inform them that this chapter is at an end. It is the practice of all wise book makers not to weary their readers by making a book which has only a beginning and an end. They break their work up into short chapters, that the reader as well as themselves may pause and take breath. Cervantes has done this in his entertaining history, and I think that he has done right. I shall therefore end here, and I shall discuss the question of style in the two next chapters,

which will have the same heading as this, so that my good friends may turn over the leaves if they like and pass on to the next chapter but two. I advise them however not to do so, if they wish to learn something that is worth knowing.





OF STYLE.

IF a man would treat this matter fully, he would treat of the style of all authors who have written in all languages. This is called the exhaustive method, but it is a method more suited to exhaust the reader's patience than to do anything else. We who live in this nook of western Europe are content with knowing how a few people have written in a few languages, and we are so prejudiced as to think that what these few languages contain is worth more to us than all the rest. I shall therefore save my readers the pain of a dissertation on all styles and even on style in general, and I shall limit myself to style in particular, which means the style of a very few writers.

Speech or writing consists of two parts, the words and the order of the words; and by the order of the words is meant not only their place in the sentence, but their relation to the words

which precede and follow. The choice of the words must depend on the subject and on the writer's ability to choose; and again the words must depend on the matter about which a man is going to write. The matter then will in a great degree determine the words, for though the larger part of every language consists of words which may be used on all occasions, there is a great number of words which are suited only to particular subjects. If we write on matters of common life, on such things as happen daily or are the subject of common conversation, we use only common words, and if we use them well, we have done all that we need to do. A man who writes a letter to a friend or on ordinary business has nothing to do but to use such words as express his meaning clearly. He will write just as a sensible man would talk, in plain words and in a simple manner without any affectation. If he has any idea that his letters will ever appear in print, he is sure to spoil them. We have a large collection of Cicero's letters, the greater part of them certainly never intended to be seen by any persons except those to whom they were addressed; and they are written with the utmost plainness and simplicity, sometimes carelessly, and perhaps even incorrectly. When Voltaire corresponded with the empress Catharine and some other great people, he may have thought that his letters would not be lost; but a large part of his letters were only meant to be read by

those who received them, and he thought no more of them after they were written. They are among the best specimens of that plain simple style which pleases because it is natural and easy, and they are enlivened by the witty and satirical vein, which failed him not when he had numbered his fourscore years. We have in English also good specimens of the easy epistolary style, such as Cowper's letters and others.

The art, if you choose to call it by that name, or the power of writing well, is as rare as the power of speaking well, and indeed of doing anything well, for the nature of things is such that most things are done well enough for some purpose, but very few are done very well. I will give an example which every man can understand : I cannot just at present find one of the same kind for the women. All men in this country, except a few, wear breeches, and I appeal to them confidently and ask how often their breeches fit well and are easy. My own long experience is decidedly unfavourable to the makers. Their style is not good. A perfect article should be easy and not unbecoming, if the wearer has legs of average quality.

Now if I have not demonstrated the rarity of good style, I have given those who choose to try, hints for making their own demonstration. Accordingly I affirm that the specimens of good writing are few ; and so I bring into a narrow

compass a subject which seemed at first to be unlimited ; and this is very different from the way in which a bungler would have handled the matter on the exhaustive method.

This being settled, in what languages must we look for the few specimens of good writing ? I think that I must not take the modern European languages, at least I will not begin with them, for fear that the people whose languages I do not mention, will be displeased with me and not read the book. It would be no excuse to say that I can't read their languages, because people do write about languages without knowing them, and, more wonderful still, even translate what they cannot understand. I must go further back. If everybody knew Hebrew, I would discourse of Hebrew style, and I should thus certainly find Hebrew readers. If our English version of the Bible faithfully represents the manner of the Hebrew, it is a very noble language, noble in its simplicity, and there is no nobleness without simplicity, and noble in the grandeur and sublimity of the thoughts. A nation is fortunate which possesses a translation of such a book, made long enough ago to be now looked on as a book of native growth ; for I believe some poor folks look on it as the original. Here we have something that may be always useful in bringing us back to simplicity when we have wandered too far from it ; for we allow a little extravagance out of re-

gard to the weakness of human nature. The translation of the Bible will endure as long as this nation. It is the plainest, the most simple, the most virile and the noblest form of the English tongue; a little coarse sometimes, but we are used to that. The learned, who are now very troublesome and becoming rather tiresome, tell us that the translators have made many mistakes, and that we ought to revise the version; which probably means that they would like to have the job. Others say, if not equally learned men, men of more sense at least, that the mistakes in the version are not very numerous, and that they do not affect the meaning much. Without knowing anything about the matter, I am of the opinion of the men of sense, and I shall settle the question at once, by saying that the version shall not be revised. What would you have? Two versions of a sacred book? You might as well have two creeds. There would be a split of the nation into old-versioners and new-versioners. I should of course be an old-versioner, and I would abuse the new-versioners most stoutly, and I know I could beat them at that. We should require two sets of bishops, old version bishops and new version bishops, double sets of deans as a matter of course; new episcopal palaces for the new version bishops, who, as their version would be finer than the old version, would want finer palaces and larger pay. I solemnly protest against this additional expense

until our poor clergy are well enough provided for without going about begging for breeches. For if my readers do not know, it is time they should know, that many of these worthy men are not only insufficiently provided with food and other necessaries, but are actually in want of that nether garment which the Common Law of England requires every man to have, if he would appear abroad. There is now in London a very useful society which collects old clothing, cast-off clothes, for the use of the poorer clergy, and as I am told that there is now no duty on advertisements, this notice may pass for one without costing me anything. All bishops, deans, prebendaries and archdeacons, all rich dignitaries of the church, their butlers and others of the household, if they wear black, as I hope they do, are requested to forward,—carriage paid will be better,—all their garments to the aforesaid, though the place has not been said yet, warehouse, dépôt, emporium, pandochonium or whatever name it may have, to forward, I say, their aforesaid cast-off clothes, and to cast them off before they are threadbare, if they mean to be good Samaritans.* If there is more collected than is wanted, we will sell what is not wanted, and apply the produce to the improve-

* Poor Clergy Relief Society. No. 32, Southampton Street, Strand. Report and other publications on Clerical Distress may be had at the office. "The Wolf at the Church Door." "Startling facts."

ment of the stipends of the inferior clergy, beginning with those which are under fifty pounds a year, and next taking in hand those between fifty and a hundred. Nobody will expect us to do anything for the stipends above a hundred a year. The lucky fellows who have this ample income will not expect it, and they will be proud to pay their income tax on it. If this society should push on its work vigorously, it would give us better hope of providing for the poor clergy than by any appeals to the rich, or to the ecclesiastical commissioners, who are really unable to do anything except for those who are not much in need of it. There will be no difficulty in selling any amount of superfluous clothing. The Americans are making a market for us in the South. In the distracted state of that country many a hard-working negro will fare badly. His master will have enough to do to clothe himself; and it would be a noble act of beneficence if we could clothe the negro and at the same time make a profit out of it. The dark man is often indifferently clad at the best times, and he will be stark naked soon. I hope the southern fighters will not keep any more prisoners, if they take them. The best thing they can do will be to strip them naked, which will be no great punishment when the warm weather comes, and to send them home. Their clothes would be really *Opima spolia*, as the Romans call it.

All this, some grave, dull fellow may say, is rambling, maudling, rant, and so forth. He knows that he would not have rambled and written such incoherent, perhaps he would say illogical stuff. People are very fond of using this word illogical; it sounds well, and as they do not know what it means, they like it the better. But I ignore all such critics. I ignore them in the true sense of the word. I ignore them in all senses of the word and in all the nonsenses of the word. This is a close, connected, cogent argument. This chapter is on Style, on all style. We speak of style of dress. Dress is a man's external style, the outward sign of the interior man. A good plain clean dress is a good plain useful style. A suit of plain cast-off clothes, not too threadbare, is also a passable style. We respect it. We see that the author has done his best and affects to be no more than he is. A fine dress, fine materials, bright colours, ill fitting, ill put on, is a bad style, and you may be sure that all that is under it is bad. A serving woman rigged out in her mistress' finery is a very bad style. She is imitating the grand style; and there never was an imitator of style yet, who either wrote or dressed well, unless he contented himself with imitating simplicity, which in fact is so simple that it may come without imitation, if a man will take care to do only that which he can do with ease. As to the

servants imitating their mistresses' style, I am not sure if the servants are not taking the lead now, and the mistresses are imitating the servant. There is style in everything as well as in writing; and next to style in writing is the dressing style. If a man has no dress, that is the naked style, to which some of our clergy are approaching.

They must be relieved by the second-hand clothes' style, in which the Hebrews are great dealers, and so I end where I began.

The English version of the Bible has had more influence on our literature and style than any other book; and if we have for some time neglected this style and used another, there are reasons for it. Our language has received a vast addition of new words which our necessities required, and new combinations of words to express new thoughts or old thoughts revived. The language is written and spoken by many millions in Europe, America, and in the British settlements; and it is certain that it will still change greatly and equally certain that it will not be improved. But the possession of a common book which all people have read, and many read often, to which all religious teachers constantly appeal, will preserve a great amount of plain, simple and intelligible language which will resist all corruption and innovation.

The opinions, tastes, habits and social institutions of Europe came from somewhere; a remark

which is more profound than it may seem at first. They did not come from everywhere, not from China, nor India, nor the Babylonians, nor even from Egypt, that land of bestial superstition, monstrous art, and impenetrable darkness into which Aegyptologues love to plunge in spite of its impenetrability. Our purest taste, our noblest thoughts, came from the bright land of Hellas. Our civil institutions, our great oeconomic designs, our warlike art, and some things which we might mend, came from the men of Italy, who conquered the western world because they were the worthiest to rule, and lost the power when they were no longer worthy of it. To Rome we owe the example of filling our towns with water, I was going to say pure water; the practice of washing ourselves, though the art is still in its infancy, to use the language of the stylists; the drainage of our filth from towns, also in its infancy; the practice of numbering our people occasionally, which was not a Hebrew institution; and the example of taxation, on which we have improved. We owe to the language of Rome also a large part of our own language, and we still go to it when we want more. I mean the language which men use for all common purposes. For our science, as we name it, we use the Greek, as the Romans used it for philosophy; and we both use it and abuse it. What wonderful names gardeners will utter to you. When you admire a flower,

you hear a name which makes you turn away in disgust. Greek and Latin are tied together perforce, unnatural unions, and beastly hybrids. The scientific say that the names convey the same sense to people of all nations, who use different languages, and that this is the great use of the jargon. I believe they do convey just the same sense to all, and it is very little.

The very names of our sciences are Greek, very pure Greek. The Logies are examples. We have the new science of Palaeontology, which has I suppose some relation to its older brother Ontology. I predict the birth of the science of Neontology which will swallow up Neology, and the glorious advent of Pantoeontology, a very comprehensive science, which will include all Ontologies, and all Logies, and finally terminate all science by uniting All in One.

If I might have chosen my time for living, I would have lived before the world is so wise as it is now; before men began to write notes or books on Homer. The Greeks had a great deal of Epic poetry out of which two poems have been preserved, and probably the best among them, the Iliad and the Odyssey. They were not in so much favor a century or two ago as they are now; and this is a good sign that we are improving. We shall soon have more translations of them than people will care to read. No man could translate the Homeric poems in a way to please everybody,

but a tolerable translation may give pleasure to those who cannot read the original. A translation should be in some kind of metre as the original is, but translators are not yet agreed what the metre should be. The court of last appeal, the public, must decide whether they will accept the English hexameter. Our language is no more suited to this verse than the German is, and I do not think that it will ultimately prevail. A rhyming translation will not do. So far the decision of the court above seems to go. Goethe somewhere in his life said that he wanted a plain prose version. If our translators of the Bible had taken it in hand, they might have made something of it, if the thing is possible. We have one now, a work of our own days, but an injunction has been issued against it out of the High Court of Common Sense.

After much hard labor I am able to make out the meaning of these old Epics pretty well, and I see my way clear enough unless I happen to be misled by a commentator. I used to think that a commentator's business was to explain his author's meaning, and that was all: but I find that his business often is to explain wrong what no man of sense can misunderstand, and when there is a great difficulty to say nothing at all; which indeed may be the best part of his commentary. If a man knows Greek as well as many hundreds in this country know it, and wishes to know what is in

Homer, let him read the two poems carefully, slowly, and some parts, repeatedly, and he will then see what there is in Homer and he will not want anybody to tell him. We have fallen, heaven knows how it has happened, though I could guess, into a most silly fashion of only reading what people write about a good book instead of reading the book itself.

Homer is a great master of style. In the first book of the Iliad he brings you at once to the matter. In a few lines he puts before you noble Achilles and the king of men wrangling before the chiefs and soldiers. You soon know what the quarrel is about. Agamemnon possesses the daughter of Chryses Apollo's priest, and when the father intreats him to release his daughter and take a rich ransom, Agamemnon sends him away with insult. The priest prays to his god for vengeance and Apollo descending in wrath scatters with his arrows pestilence through the army of the Achæi. Nine days the pestilence rages. On the tenth Achilles summons the army to a meeting and the prophet Calchas, encouraged by Achilles, tells them that they are suffering for the wrong which Agamemnon has done to Apollo's priest. Then begins the furious debate, and you know the character of Achilles and Agamemnon as well as if you had lived with them; and you foresee the mischief that will come to the common sort, when their masters do not agree. It is a

perfect dramatic scene. Chryseis, the captive daughter of the priest, the cause of the quarrel, is sent back to her father by Agamemnon her lord and lover, and a wise man, Odysseus, commands the vessel which carries her home. But the king of men executes his ignoble threat, and takes from Achilles his prize the fair Briseis to make amends for his own loss. Briseis goes unwilling, and Achilles weeps when she goes, fixing his eyes on the sea. His prayers bring his goddess mother from the watery depths where she dwells like a good daughter taking care of her aged father. Nothing could be more tender than the words in which Thetis addresses her son. It is in two lines. As people in sorrow love to tell their tale at length, Achilles tells Thetis though she knows all, and he entreats her to prevail on Zeus, the king of gods, to aid his enemies the Trojans against his own people the Achaei, that they may know by suffering what a king they have, and Agamemnon may be taught his folly in dishonouring the bravest of his warriors. He cares not who suffers if he be revenged. The mother sorrows over her son's untimely death which she knows to be his destiny, and he knows it too: and she promises to visit Olympus and urge his prayer to Zeus.

The voyage of Odysseus is soon told. He delivers the lost daughter to the father, "and he gladly receives his dear child;" and that is all.

We may imagine if we like what he said and felt, but Homer knew better than to spoil it. So some of the most tender and pathetic scenes in the Greek plays are expressed in the fewest words. Good acting did the rest.

Chryses intreats Apollo to stay the pestilence. Apollo hears the prayer and sends the sailors a fair wind to take them back to their camp. The voyage is made quick and in gallant style :

They raised the mast, and on the white sails spread :
The wind fill'd full the sail, and round the keel
The dark wave shouted as the vessel sped ;
And o'er the wave it ran making its way.

We are now introduced into the awful presence of Zeus, the son of Cronus, sitting alone on the loftiest of the many peaks of Olympus. Thetis approaches him an humble suppliant: if he has any gratitude for her past services, she prays him to grant her son's prayer. The god answers not: he sits unmoved and silent; but neither gods nor men can resist either goddesses or women when they will have their way. She had embraced his knees; she still clings to them; she asks again and asks for a promise or a refusal. Zeus at last gives his solemn promise and ratifies it by the dread movement of his head which makes Olympus tremble.

The son of Cronus had given his promise, though he knew what he would hear when he went back to his celestial mansion. Not even in heaven is

there matrimonial peace. Heré the wife of Zeus, who aids the Achæan side, knows that Thetis has been with him and she guesses what she had come about. She begins to upbraid Zeus for his secret dealings, but he silences her with a threat. She must obey her husband, or he will make her feel his strength. The haughty goddess holds her peace, but like a woman, she is not convinced; and the gods are in no pleasant mood at the sight of this domestic strife. Hephaestus, Heré's son, restores harmony by telling the gods to enjoy the feast: he soothes his angry mother, and warns her too by reminding her of what had once happened to himself when he had interfered in a quarrel between her and Zeus, and was hurled headlong from heaven's threshold by the angry king of the gods. Hephaestus now plays the part of butler, and hands his mother a cup of nectar, and she smiles, and is in good humour again. The lame god serves all the company with nectar; and there is laughter loud and long, for the cup-bearer's gait is awkward and his breath is short. It is a scene of jollity and furious mirth. Apollo plays on his lyre, and the Muses sing to it. All day long to the setting sun the revelry is prolonged. But gods must sleep as well as men. The sun's bright light goes down: there are no lamps in heaven. Every god retires to his chamber: Zeus too goes to his bed and the queen of Olympus lies by his side.

Such is something like the narrative of the first book of the *Iliad*, contained in about six hundred lines. It would be mere impertinence to point out the poetic beauty of the whole. But as a style clear, orderly, concise, vigorous it is unequalled, and it is perhaps faultless.

Aristotle speaking of Homer's superiority does not determine whether it was due to art or to nature; the exact meaning of which is not clear. The man who wrote the *Iliad* was certainly a man of excellent taste and judgment, but he must have learned something from those who went before him, for it is plain even from the language of the Homeric poems that the Greek must have been used for poetry long before any date that we can assign to the *Iliad*, and that it had undergone many of the changes incident to all languages.

The same good taste, or good sense, which are the same thing, appears all through the *Iliad*. The beauty of the beautiful Helen, the cause of the war, is not described: a few words of passing admiration from the old men in the third book are sufficient. Ariosto describes the charms of Alcina in five stanzas. He begins with her head and ends with her feet. The verses are fine: the Italian poet had an eye for woman's beauty; but he attempts to describe that which can only be understood by being seen either in a comely woman or in a fine picture. Ariosto, as Lessing says, has made a picture which is no picture. He

has attempted to paint with words, and the whole is a daub. How has it happened that he who wrote so long ago wisely avoided a blunder which another long after him did not avoid, and he a great poet too? If it is a part of wisdom to know what to do and what not to do, how much wiser in some things was antiquity than modern times.

Homer does not describe womanly beauty by an enumeration of parts. He tells us indeed that Heré has white arms and fine eyes. Helen too has white arms, and beautiful hair; and beautiful arms and fine eyes and beautiful hair help to make beauty, though they are not beauty. In the third book Helen is looking from the walls at the fight between her former and her present husband, who is only saved from Menelaus by the help of Aphrodite. The goddess sets Alexander safe in his chamber, and goes in the guise of an old woman to invite his wife to join him. She pulls Helen by the robe as she speaks to her, and Helen turns round in no good humour:

But when she saw the goddess' beauteous neck,
Her lovely bosom and her sparkling eyes,

then she knew the deity whose grace no words could describe. Homer never attempted anything further than this in representing woman's beauty.

But he has one long description, and a minute description of Achilles' shield, which a modern artist has reproduced. Notwithstanding the in-

describable charm of the poetry, some objection might have been made to the introduction of this description, but Homer's wisdom has stopped all objection, and the excellent critic Lessing has vindicated the poet. When Patroclus clad in Achilles' armour was killed and stripped by Hector, Thetis goes to Hephaestus to ask him to make fresh armour for her son. The cunning artificer promises and there is no delay. With what vigor he sets to work. The bellows blow, the metal is heated, the anvil is ready; he seizes his hammer in one hand and his pincers in the other. We see him labouring, and the wondrous shield grows beneath his blows. One group after another rises up before our eyes, and we almost believe that the shield is a reality. The rest of the armour is made in a few lines. Hephaestus places it before Thetis, who says not a word, but like a hawk she springs down from snowy Olympus bearing to her son the resplendent gift.

Lessing* has shown the great difference between Virgil's shield of Aeneas and Homer's shield of Achilles. Virgil with all his art has failed. We see Achilles' shield made. It is strong and worthy of him who will use it. But the great artificer will also make a work of art, and he adorns it with pictures of human life in the various forms of peace and war. It contains all things, heaven and earth; the sun, the moon, and the bright

* Laokoon, xviii.

constellations which glitter in the boundless firmament, on which the poet was used to gaze with wonder and to admire, as all the sons of man have done and ever will do so long as man lives on earth. The ever-flowing stream of Ocean bounds and encompasses all. Virgil's workmen prepare to make Aeneas' shield, but we are not present at the work. Venus takes it to her son when it is finished and he looks at the splendid present when he ought to be using it, and then the poet tells us all that he saw. And what does he see? Prophetic visions of the future glories of Rome, not the realities of Achilles' shield. We admit the poet's art. He could not, he would not make a mere copy of his original; but is not the German critic right when he asks, did not Virgil, finding that he could not surpass the Greek in the design and execution of the pictures, resolve to surpass him at least in the number? And what could be more childish?

The Iliad never flags. The last book is as good as the first. The aged King of Troy goes to Achilles to ask for Hector's body, and his generous enemy grants the prayer of the old man, whose son had deprived Achilles of his dear friend Patroclus. The Achaean hero is proud, impetuous, stubborn and vindictive, but still he has a noble nature. He can feel for the sorrows of a father, who has lost the brave child, the stay of his house and his nation; for he too has an aged father far

away, and he will never see him again. Achilles and Priam eat together, and after supper each gazes on the other with admiration till the old king, whose eyes had not been closed in sleep since Hector's death, asks permission to retire to rest in the tent of Achilles.

The poem is now nearly ended. Priam carries back his son's body to Troy, and nothing remains but to prepare the funeral pile. The minstrels stand by the corpse and chant the funeral dirge, to which the women respond. After line 723 there follow fifty-four verses, on which I find this note in a recent edition of the *Iliad*: "*Heynius et Knightius versus quatuor et quinquaginta damnant.*" We might very justly return the two critics their damnatory words.

There are three women in the *Iliad*, who love Hector; his wife, his mother, and Helen. All three appear in the sixth book, the tender mother, the affectionate wife, and the woman the cause of the war, who condemns herself, but hears no harsh word from her generous brother-in-law. They appear again in the last book to make their laments over Hector's body; the wife first, then the mother, and Helen last. There may be interpolations in the *Iliad*, by which I mean passages foisted in after it was brought into its finished form, whenever that was done and whoever was the workman. The *Odyssey* certainly contains such passages, some of them from the *Iliad*, and

they are manifest interpolations. I have not looked to see what objections Heynius and Knigh-tius make to the laments of the three women over Hector. Their critical scent must have been sharp indeed to detect the falsifying hand in these natural and affecting expressions of sorrow, so appropriate to the wife, the mother, and the stranger woman in a foreign land, who had lost her best friend.

Homer was the universal book from which all the Hellenic nation drew as from an ever-flowing fountain. If it did not form their religion, it helped to maintain something of the common language amidst great diversities of Hellenic speech, and also a sentiment of community which the possession of a great work in a common language must ever produce. Homer was a book for the lyric poet, the dramatist, the historian, the orator, and the philosopher; and finally for the critic and the commentator, into whose hands as into those of devouring death all mortal works must come at last. But Homer has survived all his critics ancient and modern: he resists even the attacks of commentators and translators. Ever new and ever young he is still the best example of that simplicity of style, which comes out of the consciousness of power, and is the mark of genius and an elevated soul.

But Zeus is gone to rest, and we must rest too. Writers, readers, and critics must have sleep. If

the writer goes on too long, the reader will yawn, and the critic will be revenged, if in no other way, by not reading and by consequence condemning. I shall positively finish in the next chapter. It will be a real last chapter. I retire like Priam to refresh my aged body and my wearied soul, cherishing good thoughts and hopes of another day ; not like Homer's king of heaven, who closes not his eyes after he is put to bed by the poet, but lies awake maliciously plotting how he may keep his promise to a fair goddess and deceive Agamemnon with a wicked dream.





OF STYLE.

DO not always think as Montesquieu thinks, but I always look into him with pleasure. He is lively, and has good sense. He says, "I have always had a decided taste for the works of the ancients : I have admired several criticisms which have been written against them, but I have always admired the ancients. I have studied my taste, and I have examined whether it was not one of these diseased tastes which a man should not trust to ; but the more I have examined, the more I have felt that I was right in having thought as I have thought."

Our ancients are the Greeks and Romans, or rather the Athenians and a few other Greeks ; and our Romans are the men who wrote in the Latin tongue. These people in the earlier part of their national existence wrote nothing ; then a few wrote, and wrote well ; and then many wrote, and most of them wrote ill ; just as it is now.

Many good Greek and Latin books have been lost, and some which are worth nothing still exist. Perhaps we have as much of the ancients as is good for us : we have certainly a great deal more than we have time to read with care.

I never could comprehend the common story of the origin of the Greek Drama, next to Homer the noblest literary work that man has done. You may find the story anywhere, so many have written about it repeating the old tale one after another till we are tired of it. All the real elements of a drama are in the Iliad. It is itself dramatic, though it could not be made into one drama ; but we have dramatic scenes in almost every book ; and in the tale of Troy and all its incidents the Greek dramatists found some of their best materials. How wisely these men went about their work, not inventing fictions, but taking what they found in popular story and using it well ; not merely producing old tales to please an audience or to gratify national vanity or for a political purpose, though there may be something of all this in some of their plays, but under the names of kings and heroes and men and women of olden time showing the nature of man, his loves and hatreds, his sorrows and his sufferings and the infinite variety of human life.

We know that the early Greeks made dramas or representations in which the gods appeared. They represented the marriage of Zeus and Heré

in some way ; and they might, if they liked, have represented the quarrels and loves of the celestial couple as Homer did. It was not known to the Greeks, how they came to marry their lyric poetry to the real drama, nor can we discover now. The dramatists chose for the dramatic part a style of writing, the Iambic verse, which approaches nearest to the language of common life ; and this is that part of their style which I am looking at. The lyric poetry in the dramas has great beauty, but also great faults. It is sometimes very obscure, even where the text is not corrupt, and it is disfigured by many strange thoughts expressed in stranger language. These are great faults ; but still the lyric poetry of the Greek drama is unequalled by anything that has appeared since.

There were minstrels who sung or recited verses before Homer's time, and after him too. They made some kind of music when they recited, and sometimes they recited without an instrument. The rhapsodists, as they were called, would assume and did assume, as we are told, some dress appropriate to their profession. They recited among other things the Iliad and the Odyssey ; and if they knew their business, they would use appropriate gesture. Nor would one man only recite, where there are several speakers. One might be Achilles and another might be Agamemnon, and so they had a dramatic scene, for as Aristotle observes, Homer made dramatic imitations. Having

dialogue, dress and gesture, the Greeks had the materials of a drama; and as for the stage and the decorations their old mysteries would furnish that. It was a great thing to construct such plays as they finally wrote and to act them; but it would have been wonderful if the Athenians had not done it, when so much had been done before.

Goethe in his travels in Italy has printed an Italian rhapsody. It is the conversation between Jesus and the woman of Samaria at the well, in the form of a dramatic poem. It was sung by two poor people in the street. Man and woman place themselves at a little distance from one another, and sing in turns. When they have done, the bystanders give them a small coin, and they sell their printed songs to those who will buy them. Goethe truly remarks that this dramatic song would lose all its grace in a translation. It is of some length. It has a beginning, a progress and an end. The woman at last is convinced of her sin and accepts Jesus as the spiritual bridegroom, and he deigns to accept her as a bride. Those who have not seen this curious rhapsody will be pleased if they will read it. The verse is well adapted for singing. Here is the first stanza, spoken by Jesus on reaching the well.

Sono giunto stanco e lasso
Dal mio lungo camminar.
Ecco il pozzo, e questo è il sasso
Per potermi riposar.

The form of the Greek drama required the writers to give long narrations, which are sometimes rather tiresome, but they are good examples of narrative. The dialogue is generally rapid and pointed, and sometimes obscure when the speakers come to close quarters, each sending a single line at a time to or against the other. We have long speeches too, the patterns of which are in the *Iliad*; and we should conjecture, if we did not know it, that the Greek dramatists belonged to a nation where oratory was practised. Subtle discussions too we find, especially in Euripides, such discussions as belong to schools of rhetoric. But the language of these plays is simple, plain, and very little adorned with finery. Aeschylus is generally not so simple as the other two. The oldest of the three great tragedians loves the biggest words and is most chargeable with bombast. He has however his admirers, and he has the merit of grandeur and energy; and also the demerit of some obscurity and of doing violence both to metaphor and language. The great dramatist is Sophocles; and he is so great that it is wiser to admire in silence than to find any fault. But I am only looking at his language, which is sometimes to us at least involved and in an apparent disorder; but it is always vigorous, and manly, and very rarely will you find a line, of which you can say that it is idle or feeble. This is one of his great merits. There is nothing that you would wish

to omit or which you read without receiving some clear impression; always be it understood, that you understand what you read, and do not read as some editors of Sophocles do, who miss his meaning where it is quite plain, and then set to work and mend the poet's verses.

It is my fashion to protect those whom others despise, and for this reason, but not this only I protect Euripides. It is strange that matters should have come to this pass that the favourite dramatist of antiquity should want protection. If I offer mine, I humbly beg the poet's pardon for presuming to defend him; but though to defend Euripides is presumption towards him, it is quite the contrary towards those who abuse him. Many faults he has, and so have we all; but where shall we find the dramatist who has looked so deeply into human nature, woman's heart above all, who has left us Medea, Creusa in the *Ion*, Phaedra in the *Hippolytus*, Iphigenia, *Alcestis*, and even *Electra* and *Clytemnestra* in the much abused play of the *Electra*? I am of the mind of a German whom I have mentioned several times. He used to think that Euripides had done wrong sometimes; but he thought again, and finally he thought that he might be mistaken and that the poet knew better than he did.

Euripides goes up and down in the aesthetical market. I have been told that he was up in Germany a few years ago, and I conclude that he is

now down again, for nothing is fixed in this world. We have learned much from the Germans and we owe them much. But they are very unstable folks, and we in this country are very much given to take their opinion on matters of taste, which implies a want of confidence in our own judgment.

W. Schlegel was for a time the man who undertook to be our teacher in estimating the dramatic art of the Greeks, and we could hardly have had a worse. His great talents were spoiled by his vanity, and he was not the kind of man to pass judgment on Euripides. If he is sometimes right, that does not make him a safe guide, for he is often quite wide of the mark. He wrote a German *Ion* to show us how Euripides should have managed the play; or if it was not for this, I don't know why he wrote it. Perhaps it is nearly forgotten, and he lived long enough to curse his own presumption.

Goethe has written an *Iphigenia*. He labored at it long and was pleased with it, and not without reason. It is admirably written. But as a drama it bears no comparison with the corresponding *Iphigenia* of Euripides, nor do I believe that the author thought that it did. We have still the best thing that has been done by the moderns in the Greek style, in Milton's *Samson*; but we ought to learn at last that the form of the Greek drama is not suited for our age, and that Greek stories are

not the things to make modern plays of. That has been proved if it needed proof, by the foolish attempts made in our own language. The French have done a good deal in this line, and they are well satisfied with it. They have certainly done it better than those who have attempted it in English. But let any man of sense, except a Frenchman, compare Racine's *Phèdre* as a drama or as a composition with the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, and he will see how mean, how poverty-stricken the thing is, and yet Racine might have been a dramatist if he had been a Greek. I have often wondered that Schiller ever took the pains to translate the *Phèdre*. But he was not formed by studying the French drama. His best education was in the Greek writers and in Shakspeare. He found out before it was too late that he was going wrong. He says of one period of his life: "I now read scarcely anything but Homer: the ancients give me real enjoyment. I have also need of them particularly to purify my taste, which by aiming at epigrammatic point, and striving after the artificial and an affectation of wit began to be far removed from true simplicity."

The Greek plays have passed down to us through numerous transcriptions, and as we might suppose, the manuscripts contain many errors. Some of the mistakes are easily corrected, for the wrong writing shows what the true writing must

be. Other mistakes have been corrected by a careful comparison of manuscripts and now and then by a lucky guess which commands our assent. The dexterous hand and sharp wit have done this, and stopped because no more could be done. But there still remain passages which are evidently wrong and cannot be set right, and here is a fine opportunity for the botcher. Each editor has his salve and plaister, but not the same salve and plaister. Some of the remedies make the disease worse and end in producing a frightful ulcer. Again, the text may be all right, but the critic, too busy with a few words to know what all the play is about and to look either before or behind, too eager to show his professional skill, finds out some imaginary ailment and converts a sound place into a sore. Very few who read these plays know all the mischief that has been done. Some day there shall appear, but I know not when, a man who to an exact knowledge of the language will add a pure taste and sound judgment, who will study the Greek dramatists till he has fully comprehended the design of the writers and conceived how the actors would deliver their parts, who will see what the dramatist often expressed in a few words and left the actor to complete; and when he has done all this, he will discover where error lies, what is within the reach of cure and what is past cure; and he will end his work by sweeping away the foul

matter with which these noble works have been defiled by conceited and tasteless critics.

So far I have spoken only of poets, for the Greeks had poets before they had prose writers. We suppose that they spoke in prose like other people, and their good taste would lead them to speak well. There is no difference in all the essentials of style between good poetry and good prose. Nonsense is nonsense whether it is rhythm, rhyme or prose; and idle epithets, and tedious drawling, and affectation, and bombast, and obscurity and all other ugliness is as common in verse as in prose. There is only one excuse for obscurity that I have been able to discover. When a man has nothing to say, or something to say that is worth nothing, or some poor common-place to lay before you, or some idea to express without exactly knowing what it is, let him wrap it up well in a great many words, as much of the Greek and Latin as he can command and more than he understands, in long rumbling words which fill the ear, like the sound of a cannon, that in the midst of the noise and smoke he may sneak off and leave his reader in bewilderment and wonder. This is an excellent method, for if you are not understood, you have only to say that it is not your fault: you only supply the matter, the reader must supply the understanding. If the reader should say that he has found that some of the best and deepest thoughts have been expressed in

the very simplest words, he will tell you that was all very well in the infancy of the world, but we are now grown to man's estate and we think and speak as men and have thrown away childish things. What more childish than to speak and write a language which everybody can comprehend?

It is lucky for us that neither the Chinese, nor the Hindu nor the Egyptian were our progenitors and teachers. I cannot conceive what we should have been doing now. If the Moors had overrun Europe or the Turk, and we had been made into Mohammedans, it is supposed that we should have been constantly washing ourselves and have been always sober. This would have been very well, but still not enough. I have a respect for the Turk to a certain extent, as I once heard a man say who did not intend to tell the truth, that he was a friend of justice up to a certain point. But I cannot excuse the Turk for his want of taste in destroying many beautiful things, though possibly more blame may have been laid on his back than he deserves. It seems as if various nations and various ages had their missions, as we call it; the Chinese to make ugly things, the Greeks to make beautiful things. So good writing came to the Greeks as naturally as other conceptions of beauty and without teaching. There are things which cannot be taught. You cannot teach a person to be graceful and dignified without affectation. You

may check and mend many bad dispositions, prevent some bad habits from being formed, set a good example, and enforce virtue by a few short precepts, all which is the business of education, and so you make men tolerably fit for the purposes of life. But you can do no more. The rest is in the interior man. There are no two externals alike among all the human race, nor, I believe, are there two internals alike. Nations have their characteristic externals and internals. We shall never make statues like the Greek nor write like him, though we may do both well in our own way, if we only make simplicity our guide. I have not defined simplicity. I hate definitions. They only give people the opportunity of finding fault with you. Euclid made a mistake in defining a straight line. If you do not know what simplicity is, I will not tell you. If it is necessary to tell you, you will not know when you are told.

I cannot pass over the Father of History, as he is often called, not the father of our modern history, nor of history as those after him conceived it. Herodotus made a prose epic on the wars of the Greeks and Persians, a wondrous strange one, very amusing and full of strange things. He did not lie nor invent. He told what he saw and what he heard, and no doubt he heard more than was true. But the great printer and scholar Henri Etienne, vulgarly called Henry

Stephens, has answered the charges of lying. Herodotus was certainly not a perfect writer. He has a charming simplicity and good nature; but I never could comprehend many of his sentences, nor how he wriggled himself out of such a tangled web.

The perfection of writing comes very near to its corruption. When a language has been brought into a settled form, when what we call its grammar is well fixed, and the process of filing and polishing has begun, and you can do no more, you must do something else. You must strain, and jerk, and twist about, and convulse yourself, make antics, grin, caper, stand on your head, do anything to attract attention. What is the use of all your fine writing if people will not read it? All that you know, says the Roman satirist, is nothing, if you can't make your neighbour know that you know it. Accordingly when the plain, simple, clear and unaffected style has been reached and been worn out, because people are tired of it, we enter on the age of styles infinite in number, with now and then a pleasing variety among them. We have styles and manners to suit everybody. The heavy long tedious compilatory style, very precise, rather disdainful, much liked by the few, who if they did any writing, would do it in the same way. The easy smooth, universal style, very like the reformed handwritings which you may have seen in windows, where you have

samples of all kinds of hideous scrawls reduced to uniformity by the writing master's skill. This is a good, useful, and the only style for those who have nothing to say. It passes off well, just as a miserable letter written in the universal handwriting looks well; while a really good letter written in a bad natural hand would be pronounced the work of a vulgar ill-bred person.

I cannot make a list of all the styles. There are almost as many as there are adjectives, and I don't know how many of these words we have. There is the funny style much in favor with coarse Englishmen. I do not think that it is so difficult to write. The style indeed may be funny without being very coarse, but its fundamental quality, as we sometimes say, is coarseness. This style may help us to pass half an hour sometimes, if it continues true to itself; but if it wanders one hair's breadth into the pathetic, the serious, the sublime, or even into that quiet humour which an Englishman loves, it is all over with it. There are styles on stilts. Unluckily some really great writers have walked a little too much on these dangerous artificial legs. There is the dashing style. It is easily described. It is simply writing as fast as you can anything that comes into your head without caring whether it is false or true, not stopping to read over what you have written, or to correct it, kicking your words about in any order or no order, leaving one part of a sentence before you

have finished it and hurrying on to another part, and finally winding up with something which by the aid of the printer's stops and reading the whole two or three times, you may possibly connect with the beginning or the middle of the sentence.

Finally, to end this endless matter, I once read a book, and was not able to find a name for the style. But a clever writer in a newspaper helped me to the name. It was the volcanic style. If you light on the book, you will know it.

As everybody writes now, so we must have as much bad writing, as we have bad talking, and bad everything. It has been supposed that the corruption of our language and the badness of our writing come from writing too much and in a hurry. I am not of that opinion, though much writing and great hurry are not favorable to good work. We might excuse those who must write daily and often very quick, if they should sometimes be careless and loose. But so far as respects the writing, to say nothing of the thoughts, these gentlemen generally write very well and in a pleasing manner. If they have taste and ability they must by practice write well after a little experience, and better than many men who mope over a book for years. If they are wise men, they will of course think before they write, and then they may write quick and well too. One does not see why a man cannot learn to write with ease and well as he

may learn to speak with ease and well. There are many articles both in English and American papers which we could not easily mend. The truth or falsehood of what they contain is nothing to the present purpose, though I should add, to prevent any mistake, that if I read a book and am pleased with the manner, my admiration will not continue, if I find that the matter is not good. A book is like all other things in this that it consists of matter and form. If there is only form, it has no existence: it is a fantasy, an image with no corresponding reality. If there is only matter, it is not a book, for the form is that by virtue of which a certain quantity of matter is taken out of the universal substance and acquires an existence of its own: it may be a horse, a man, a picture, a book.

To my taste the Athenian language attained its perfection in the best orations of Demosthenes. I do not believe that we have them as he delivered them. We have them as he wrote and corrected them. I do not deny that he put his speeches in a written form before he delivered them, and he would do this in order to have all his matter well arranged, and to find some of the fittest words. But if he was so great in action and delivery as we are told, and delivery is the life of speech, he would not bind himself to the words of a written oration, and he could not. Perhaps even the rabble of Athens had a fine taste, though there

must have been plenty of coarseness too in the Athenians, or Aristophanes would never have seasoned his brilliant wit with the grossest obscenity that a man of genius ever wrote; unless it be Rabelais, who had genius too, and great learning, and wit infinite, and obscenity enough to satisfy even the Frenchmen of that day. Pericles tells the Athenians that they admired simplicity and severe beauty, and were not taken with glitter and show; and I believe him. Their art and their best writings prove it. But they did not dislike a little coarseness and filthy talk. The excuse made for them is that they called a spade a spade. Be it so. But there are spades that we need not talk of, and we can be merry and witty without their help.

The attention of a popular assembly must be commanded by a less exact and perfect style than Demosthenes' written speeches, and by the power and life of the delivery. We have all heard fine speeches recited as a school boy would recite what he has written. There is no possibility of being mistaken about such speeches. They were all written, stored in the memory, and discharged with decency, but they were not oratory. Demosthenes after delivering his speeches finally wrote them out and left them as models of a perfect style. They are sometimes too elaborate and the sentences too nicely balanced to please me. He has not the infinite variety of Cicero, who if he

was not Demosthenes' equal in gravity and dignity, was his superior in satire and playfulness. Of all the orators I have read of, and we have some fragments to judge by, I should have preferred the Roman tribune C. Gracchus. He lived in turbulent times and his short public life was a continual fight. His mother taught him to speak Latin well: industry, political strife and the energy of the man's nature did the rest. There is never any great speaking where there is not a great cause. There must be real things to talk about, and the speaker's soul must be in his matter. The later Greeks and the later Romans fell into rhetoric and declamation. We have an instructive example of the difference between reality and unreality in two ancient orations. Demosthenes has left an oration against Leptines, a clear, forcible and excellent discourse. The frigid rhetorician Aristides, who lived in the time of M. Antoninus, has written a Leptines too. And what a difference! The difference between a man and a eunuch.

Isocrates was the great style polisher. He went on filing and polishing till he was near a hundred years of age. His language has a perfect finish. The parts of his sentences correspond like the parts of a well made piece of machinery. All is exact, smooth and oiled, and the machine moves with ease. But the motion is uniform and tiresome. It is the business of

the machine to be always doing the same thing exactly in the same way. But it is not the business of speech or writing to go on continually in one equable flow. We grow tired of eternal sunshine, and eternal quiet, and I can answer for myself, of eternal good eating and drinking. We must have variety and change, or we die.

It is said that Thucydides was Demosthenes' model, and that he copied the great historian often. I say, it is said, and I do not see why it may not be true. He could not have done better. To let the reader into a little secret, I must tell him that I do not love modern history writing. It is very philosophical no doubt, and very critical, and it shows great labor and great acuteness, and many other things that the reader may discover for himself. I like to read something written by a man who saw what was going on or was an actor in it, a man of sense and sharp observation and just judgment. For this reason I love Caesar. He did what he tells you; or if he tells you anything that any of his generals did, he tells it just in the same way in which he speaks of his own acts. He writes the story of his campaigns, and he seldom says anything that is not immediately connected with them. He has two or three digressions, for which we are much obliged to him. His book is too good for common use. People cannot understand why it should be so bare and simple and unpretending; and they

never will understand till their taste is improved. We all admire art, high art, as it is termed, as if there were also low art—and perhaps there is. Put before your fine judge some of the finest things that painters' pencil or sculptors' skill has produced, and ask for his judgment. He will not know what to say, if he does not know what others have said. He will be afraid to praise a thing so simple. He knows that he must admire the Medici Venus and the Belvedere Apollo, and of course he admires them. He is yet hardly acquainted with our lady of Milo, and he waits till she is canonized, before he knows whether he should address his prayers to her or not. I am very sorry for him. If he must see with other people's eyes and judge with other people's brains, it is his misfortune not his fault.

Histories which are made up from various fragments and authorities and conjectures may be very ingenious and useful too; but to do this thing well is almost beyond man's power. Such histories generally become dissertations and discourses, and a balancing of probabilities, and depositories of reflections often neither new nor true. This labor of weighing conflicting evidence and estimating probabilities is an historian's duty, but we do not want to see his labor. When he has reached probability, for there is nothing beyond that, though the degrees of probability are infinite, his business is to give us the result, and we must

take it on his credit. If his work is good, time, the supreme judge, will give a true verdict.

I admire the simplicity of Thucydides' narrative. He has a preface, which shows how he worked. He spared no pains to inquire, but you do not see his pains in his story. He tells you things as facts, very rarely intimating a doubt. He fixes times, numbers of men, describes places, battles and other circumstances as minutely as if he had been on the spot; and yet every man knows, who has observed human affairs, that no single event was ever reported with perfect accuracy. If he had told us in every chapter how he learned what he tells us, I should not believe him a bit the more. It is the fault of modern taste that historical writers are so diffuse. They must please their readers. We have no conception of the simple and severe, and we like to have easy reading and to dispense with thinking. Mankind in general, says Thucydides, are intolerant of the labor of seeking after truth, and Tacitus in substance says the same: and they are equally intolerant of the labor of studying a great writer, whose style is condensed and vigorous, and the thoughts hard to reach without an effort corresponding to the pains of the writer. For a man may write as plain and simple as you please, and yet his thoughts may not be easily apprehended. It is an old remark and quite true, that great minds and great things are not fathomed easily.

It is a pleasure to read a narrative in Thucydides, to have things placed clearly before you, to be left to imagine what he does not tell you, and still to feel sure that it was there, and not to be plagued by writers' perpetual remarks and reflections, and by an epithet to every noun, as if we could not discover the true quality of a thing without being told. These men chew the morsels for us, says Montaigne. But they shall not chew for me old as I am. I still have my teeth. I have not reached my second childhood yet. Thucydides rarely deviates from the simple narrative to make reflections. In the third book he has several chapters on the state of the Hellenic nation, which state was the consequence of the war. These chapters might be called reflections and the like, but they are not. They are facts still, only they are general, not particular. These chapters are hard reading, but when you have cracked the nut, you will be paid for your pains.

This great writer put his own views of things in the form of speeches in other men's mouths. Speeches were generally delivered on the occasions when he makes the speeches; and if he did not always know what was said, and it is certain that he did not, he makes his speakers say what was fit for the occasion; and so we learn to form a judgment of human affairs by being told what was done and what followed, and what ought to have been done, and what would have followed, if

men had judged differently. A single volume of moderate size contains the history of Thucydides, and as much political wisdom as the world will ever have. As men did then so they must do now. We must look at what is before us and judge what should be done and what should not be done, and what will probably be the result of acting or not acting. Human nature changes not, and the principles of a right judgment on human affairs are in a book of small compass, and I see nothing new in any of our political disquisitions: nothing new in principles. But we have now to apply true principles to modern circumstances often very complicated and hazardous. Here lies the difficulty, and in the application the power of a good political writer is tried.

If I wanted a manual for a statesman's use, I would take Thucydides. Tacitus too may be useful, but I doubt if there is anything new in him. The greatest of the moderns in this way is Machiavelli. He saw things with his own eyes, and he was an actor in them too. His character has nothing to do with his writings, though I think that he was as honest as an Italian of his day could be. Those who charge him with teaching immorality have not read him carefully or they have not understood him; or if they have understood him, they have dishonestly abused him. The charge is no more true than it would be true to charge Thucydides with immorality,

which may have been done, for what I know. Machiavelli tells us how men act, and how they must act, if they will accomplish certain ends; but he does not say that all ends are good, nor does he think that they are. The great work of Machiavelli is his Discourses on Livy, and if a man will read them now instead of merely talking about them, he will be wiser for his pains. Machiavelli alone has understood the Roman polity. Poor and feeble compared with him are the men who have been our instructors in Roman history. Italy owes much to Machiavelli. If Italy will be free, she must follow his advice: she must revive the military discipline of the Romans, and the age of heroic virtue, simplicity and self-denial: the Italians must become men and soldiers, and then and not sooner will the hated stranger retire before the legions of Italy. The path to freedom is hard and rough, but Machiavelli has pointed it out, and there is no other.*

* I make a note, though I do not like notes; but sometimes they are necessary. Besides his Discourses on Livy, Machiavelli wrote a treatise on the art of war, and his treatise is full of sound sense. It is one of the wisest books that I have read, and I have read many good books, and I have tried to profit by them. If a man will read carefully Machiavelli's Prince, he will see what Machiavelli wanted. In the noble chapter with which he concludes this book, he tells us that he is waiting for Italy's redeemer. The great enemy of Italy (*Discorsi*, i. c. 12) is the Papal power, which, he says, had corrupted religion and made Italy the prey of the foreigner. "This barbarian

Thucydides took great pains with his writing. He labored to be as brief as he could, and that was a great matter in those days when there was no printing. A fairly written book would not be cheap and a big book would have had few readers. Cicero complains that Thucydides is difficult to understand, difficult for him a Roman, who knew Greek well. He rightly says that he could not imitate his orations, if he wished, and perhaps he would not wish to imitate them if he could. If Thucydides, he says, had lived later, he would have been more ripe and milder, as he expresses it, drawing his metaphor from the wine cask. But we are glad to have him as he is, austere and strong. It is a good wholesome drink for those whose heads will bear it.

Tacitus is a writer whom we like better when we know him well. Like most good things he improves on acquaintance. At least I find it so. There seems however more of affectation in Tacitus

dominion stinks in every man's nostrils. Let your illustrious house then," he is addressing Lorenzo di Piero de' Medici, "undertake this enterprize with that spirit and with those hopes with which just designs are undertaken, in order that under its banner both this country may be ennobled by it and under its auspices may be verified what Petrarca says :

Virtù contro al furore
Prenderà l' arme e fia il combatter corto :
Che l' antico valore
Negli Italici cuor non è ancor morto."

than in Thucydides, who is perhaps nearly free from it; but I am not quite sure of that. There is a labored antithesis sometimes in the orations of Thucydides, which betrays an effort to produce an effect. But if this is so, we get the solid truth, and not mere words. Tacitus must have worked hard to bring his annals into a small compass, as men now-a-days work hard to inflate their books like a balloon. He has produced a work which shows great depth of thought, a careful examination into facts, generally a just judgment, and a singular, but energetic style, in which the Latin language reduced to its utmost limits of concision is still perfectly intelligible, vigorous and pleasing. Indeed I know no language which can be compared with the Latin, when it is written well. The last great Roman writer has left not only a monument of his genius, but a sample of style, which we justly admire, but should not attempt to imitate.

There is an Italian translation of Tacitus, rather more concise than the original, and the translator determined to make it so. Davanzati showed by his translation of Tacitus what his language could do. His version is sometimes difficult and obscure, and he has sometimes mistaken the meaning: but it is a noble translation of Tacitus and a fine example of the power of the Italian tongue. We can hardly say what this language can do. I know not whether Voltaire knew Italian very

well or whether he meant what he said when he told Cesarotti that the Italian language says all that it chooses, and the French only what it can. The Italian has changed little for centuries, and the reason is plain. Italy is full of spoken dialects, and Italian has been the language of a small part of Italy only, and of the educated. Political circumstances, the unfortunate division of Italy into petty states, the inroads of the foreigner, and the eternal intrigues of Italy's greatest enemy, the Papal power, have prevented the growth of a national literature all over the peninsula. But if we look at all that the Italians have done for literature and for science, we shall rather wonder that they have done so much than complain because they have not done more. If action, writing and speaking, shall become free all over Italy, the Italian tongue must feel the effect. I hope the Italians will not spoil their language, and I think that they may improve their style. It is sometimes drawling and heavy owing to the forms of many of the words ; and few of their writers have known how to make the best use of it.

The French take more pains with their style than we do. The first thing that a Frenchman looks at in a book is the style. The best French writers certainly write with great precision and clearness. They have the art of dressing up even poor matter in a pleasing form ; just in the same way that their cooks make tolerable dishes out of

food which our cookery would spoil. The French a long time ago began to improve their language by translations from the Latin and the Greek, and we translated some of their translations, and in this manner we polished and improved our rough English. In those days the French had great scholars, the first in Europe, and the greatest that have appeared yet. Amyot's translation of Plutarch's Lives was one of those works, which made the French acquainted with a good ancient writer and at the same time gave them a sample of a better French style. North's English translation of the Lives is a version of the French, and where it differs from it, the English is generally wrong. This old French translation is very correct.

If any man will study a good French writer, he will see with what skill he has arranged his words, so that the ideas which naturally come together are not dissevered in the verbal representation. We English take very little pains with the arrangement of our words, and we have fallen into such a bad way of writing, that even the most careful are not free from blame in this matter. In our sentences you will often find the most ludicrous contrasts; you will see words and phrases placed side by side which have no relation to one another, but belong to something which is a long way off in the sentence. The French has a greater power than our language of placing

words in the order which makes the sense most clear; and this is one part of style at which they have worked most successfully. If our language will not allow us to do all that the French do, we can at least mend in this respect. I note the fault because it is so common. Every educated Frenchman, who is well acquainted with our language, observes the disorderly arrangement of our periods.

The old French tongue had more vigour than the modern; and to my taste the old poetry is the best. The language has lost strength in the polishing process. Since the Revolution it has changed greatly, without being always improved, though some of the best French writers belong to the present century. New circumstances and new things of course require new words and new forms of expression, of which the French have a great abundance. Old words too have received new meanings, and many good old words have died like other mortal things. It is hard to foresee what the French will make of their language at last. They never let anything remain quiet, if they are allowed to have their way, and so they will probably go on changing their language till Voltaire will become as difficult to read to the Gaul of the year 1962 as Montaigne and Rabelais and the old chroniclers are to him now. The French have no national popular works like our translation of the Bible and Shakspeare, with

which every educated Englishman is familiar; and accordingly they have no fixed standard of language to appeal to. They have indeed one charming little book, which is universally known, the fables of La Fontaine; but this is not enough, and I suspect that the antiquated forms of La Fontaine are not much in favour with the modern tongue-polishers. Voltaire used to be the Frenchman's Bible. There have been innumerable reprints of many of his more popular works. He is indeed an excellent model for clearness of thought, and clearness of expression, simplicity of style, sharp wit and clever argument. It is almost impossible for Voltaire to be dull, even when he has a dull subject. But the day of this brilliant Frenchman's style is past, and we have reached the age of extravagance in language as well as in mountebankism. Many of the modern French writers who have great merit both of thought and expression, are too laboured, too affected, too gesticulatory in their style to please my taste. I like simplicity and force, and dignity, when it is necessary; but none of these qualities can exist in a writer who is evidently straining and torturing himself like a clown at a pantomime. Nor do I like the style which is called the Academical. It is cold and freezing and tiresome, stiff and formal, but I suppose always correct.

The French writers say that theirs is the most difficult language in the world to write, and as

they are such excellent linguists, they must of course know. As I do not know all languages, and of course cannot write them, I am unable to say whether what they say is true. But it is most certainly a very difficult language to write well, and nobody should attempt it, unless he has been bred in France. It is not enough to write a language grammatically, as it is termed; for a man might learn to write French without making a fault, and still his style would be detestable, of which we have examples.

I am quite uneasy about this language. It is almost past my comprehension now, so much has it changed since I was a boy. Perhaps the Emperor of the French might do something to keep the language steady. I am not very well acquainted with his imperial majesty's works; but as he has ideas and thinks for the whole nation on most matters of weight, he ought to write for them too, and give them a work which may become universal and a standard of style. He has at his command, if he wants the use of a dictionary, a more valuable work of its kind than we have, or any other European nation that I have heard of. I might be content with this vague reference, and assume that all my readers will understand me, but as I know that many will not, I shall tell them that I mean *Bescherelle's** dictionary. I wish we

[* There is another now, a valuable work, *Littre's*.—ED.]

had one as good, and our writing men would use it.

Our cousins the Germans are great bookmakers, and we are purchasers of their books, and we read them, when we can. These people have had the bad taste to foist into their language many words, which they do not want, Latin, Greek and even French. Of old the German used to invade the Gallic territory, and his last great inroad was so effectual that he settled himself in the northern parts and gave his name to the French. A long time after some enemies of the Fatherland imported bags full of French words into the German language, which the Frenchman observing thought that he might go himself and take possession of the country. He amused himself there for a time, strutting about in authority in a way that none but a Frenchman can do. The German after some hard work shoved him out, and I trust that he is now wise enough not to let the Gaul in again. I wish the German would pack up all the Frenchman's words and send them after him.

I have been much pleased with the proposal of a German for the purification of his tongue. He would banish the foreign words, which are not wanted, and he would use in their place only words from the German mint. If we could ever have used our English as the Germans can use their language, we might have built it up out of native matter. I cannot say whether this could

have been done. Certainly it was not done. We were first invaded by the Norman, whose language had some effect on our English. But I believe that the study of the Latin, once the language of all the learned in Europe, has mainly contributed to form our present tongue. Our learned Englishmen, even nobles sometimes, used to write Latin well; and when the fashion of writing Latin went out and men began to write English, they used the Latin largely. Thus not only Latin words, but Latin forms of expression were freely introduced. Those who have not looked into this matter will be surprised, if they will look into it, to find so large a number of Latin idioms literally translated and now the commonest forms of expression. The study of Latin and the translation of Latin and Greek books from French translations into English, as I have already observed, have stamped a Roman character on the English, which the language can never throw off.

The Germans used to write Latin too and long neglected their own language, but when they begun to work at it, they found that it was an inexhaustible material, and they had stuff in abundance without foreign importation. Unluckily, as I have said, they did not always stick to the tongue of the Fatherland, and some of their writers had not taste enough to see that what they had was better than what they stole from other languages. But it is not too late to purge

their tongue and to make it clean and wholesome.

Might I take the liberty to ask the Germans to mend their style? Most of them give less care to it than we do to ours. Their scholars, or philologers, as they are termed, who ought to write well, if anybody does, often write abominably ill. Some of the writers on law have written very well, which may perhaps be explained by the fact that a good law writer must aim at clearness and precision; partly too by the fact that these men work at Roman law, and read Roman writers, who wrote Latin well, when other men were writing it very badly. There is not much to say for the style of our English legal literature. If you find a law book well written, it is a rare thing.

I request the Germans to make their periods shorter, not to stuff them with parentheses, not to put in one sentence a number of things so disconnected that when we reach the end we have forgotten what was at the beginning. I will allow them now and then a sentence half a page long, for when I see it, I can pass it over, knowing well that I shall not understand what the author himself did not understand. There is no excuse for this bad writing. There are Germans who have written well, but they were men who took pains with their work and were men of ability. When a German who has little capacity is resolved to

write, and knows not how to use the wonderful instrument which his fathers have transmitted to him, he makes a shocking business of it. He is like a bad rider mounted on a strong fiery horse, which carries the poor man where it likes. All we can hope is that he will not break his neck or throw down the beast, which he cannot guide. We are glad to see him dismount alive and we hope that we may never see him attempt so mad a freak again. If these men do not mend their style, they will seriously damage the book business, which is an important branch of manufacturing industry in their country; and as we Britons buy more of their books than we can understand, it is the interest of the manufacturers to make a saleable article, or they run the risk of spoiling the foreign trade. The German is hard enough for all of us, even when it is written well. But when it is written ill, as ill as it often is written, it is the most disgusting, confusing, unintelligible rubbish that ever human perversity swept together. I have some German books, which I have looked into, but I always close them in despair. I cannot understand them and I will lay any wager that the authors never did. If there were any fair dealing among the German manufacturers, they would take these articles off my hands, give me back my money, and some compensation for loss of time and patience.

Before parting with these two chapters I thought

of submitting them to some French polisher to prepare them for the market and make them a perfect model of style. But I have changed my mind. If you send your manuscript to a man, he immediately sets to work to refashion it altogether, and perhaps you may not like what he does. If you try another, he will do the same, but the alterations will be different. Try a third, and he will have his own notions of taste, but different from the other two. Your critics will destroy one after another all the bits which pleased the author best; and as they will not agree in their corrections, the author may fairly reject them all. I have seen by the advertisements on title pages, that there are men and even women, who undertake to edit works for obscure, unknown writers, and they decorate the title page with their own respected names. When I come to the fortieth thousand of my work, I shall then consider whether it is worth while to invite these accomplished ladies and gentlemen to improve me up to a hundred thousand.





OF BOOKS.

MONTAIGNE, you will say, has a chapter on books. I know it, and I read it before some of you were born, and I may read it again. I don't remember much about it; and if I did, it would be of no use to me, though I am free to admit, as the candid say, that it is a great deal better than this chapter will be.

There are some things which we hardly know how to lay hold of, they are either so big or so little or so dirty or so hot or so prickly or something else whatever it may be. There are many things which we know not how to begin, and we cannot see the end, if we do begin. This book business is one of them. But as all roads lead to the same place, if you will travel long enough and turn often enough, so I shall begin this matter somewhere, I don't know where yet, and I shall

certainly end somewhere, though I cannot now see where.

The number of books is alarming, said Voltaire in one of his letters, but after all we deal with them as with men : we make our choice out of the lump. He says too that the number of useless books is so immense that the life time of a man would not be sufficient to make a list of them. What would he say if he were alive now ? As to choosing the best, that is generally easy enough to do among the old books, for time has fixed their value. Yet there are good books buried and forgotten, though not dead. Now and then they are dug up by some adventurous miner, and the precious metal circulates again. But the difficulty is to choose among the books which are born now. They come into the world as fast as children. Many good books are lost in the rabble, and it will be the business of the next generation to discover them. Reviewers help us somewhat in our choice, and they are very useful men, when they do their work well. But they are not infallible like the Pope. If the Holy Father had time to read all that is written, he could tell us what to read ; but I am afraid that he has too much business of another kind on hand. If I might presume to give a word of advice to editors of reviews and journals of all kinds, I would tell them to employ only honest and sensible men in the censorship of books, men who will read them carefully and tell us

what is in them. This is sometimes done very well, and we are all much obliged to our anonymous guide. If we knew his name, we might find it some security for trusting to his judgment; but it may be said that he would not be so ready to give his judgment, if he must also give his name. I have not yet quite settled whether it is better that his name should go with his judgment or that we should have the judgment without the name. In this country we prefer anonymous writing in reviews and journals, and secret voting in clubs and some other places. But we are compelled to record both our name and our judgment when we decide between rival candidates for a seat in the Commons' house. There are reasons for everything good and bad, and it is not my present business to give a judgment in this case either with my name or without it. I shall only observe that we do not require the names of the voters at elections to help us in estimating the value of their judgment.

The British Legislature has encouraged the manufacture of books, probably at one time with the purpose of increasing the consumption of paper after first levying a tax on it; but as this reason has now ceased, there must be some other object, if the encouragement is continued. We have built in London an enormous Bookhouse, and we compel every bookmaker to send a copy of his book there, and we pay a man well to look sharp

after defaulters. They say that this Bookhouse receives thirty-five thousand books every year, not all new, we will hope. If you multiply this number by the number of years which will complete the present century, without allowing anything for an increased rate, and add to this the number of books already warehoused, you will have a sum total of lumber for our descendants to look after almost as frightful as our national debt. They will rid themselves of the books however easier than of the debt. Many of them will die of the paper rot. As to those which are made of tougher stuff, some wise man may repeat the experiment made on the famous Alexandrine library, Whether that story is true or not, is not very material. The books are gone.

Perhaps it would be well if the trustees of this great collection of books and of other things, much more valuable than most of the books, should sit daily and read all the books which come in and turn out those which do not deserve admission. A man might then put on the title page of his book, A. T. T. B. M, which will mean "Admitted to the British Museum;" and this would be like a medal or a cross or a K. C. B. or any other big letters in which little people rejoice. I should require each trustee to read ten hours every day except Sundays, and a few great festivals. If he found a book in some language that he could not understand, he might

call in the aid of the polyglot gentleman in the Bookhouse who could help him, for there is one who can read all books.

The Legislature in its wisdom has resolved that every book-maker shall be so far immortalized that at least one copy of his book shall escape the grocer's shop. The object of this far-seeing body appears to be to collect an enormous store of materials, to deposit them in strata or layers, or beds, in order that gold seekers may dig into the dirt, crush the hard stuff, wash it and clean it, and get out an ounce or so from a ton. They have provided handsomely for the miners and charge nothing. You may see the miners, male and female, at work under a noble dome, the device of some clever head and the work of skillful hands. Here they are daily at work, save Sundays of course and a few holidays, and all working for the good of mankind and their own too. Here is the place where books beget books. Big books beget little books, and many books labor together to beget one book. When the child is born into the world, he is duly received into the place which gave him birth; he lives his day, sometimes a single day; or he may be still born. It matters not. The Bookhouse will have the carcase. Living and dead are pitched altogether among their ancestors to supply materials for future generations. Thus Nature is ever active, making and unmaking and making again,

using up her imperishable stuff to create new beings and new books.

The sight of a huge library makes me melancholy. There is a silent sepulchral aspect, a nauseous cadaverous smell, a fine pungent dust in perpetual motion. It is a cemetery, a charnel house. Many good things are there, but you know not how to get at them. Sense finite is embedded in nonsense infinite. The good books are buried. They are like a man in a countless multitude, where people elbow and shove for room. He may be a better man than all the rest, but he feels that he is nobody. It is an excellent cure for pride to put yourself in a crowd. You will learn then that however good and great you are in your own eyes, when you are alone or with a few, you are only one of the rest when you are among many.

Addison's reflections in Westminster Abbey or Hervey's meditations among the tombs are the reflections which a wise man will make in a great library. He will think of the years of toil and anxiety, of the headaches, the sorrows, the disappointments of the men who labored to produce all these books. And where are they now? Dead and buried like their books, their very names forgotten, and their books often used by other book-makers to make new books out of them, without even thanking him who had labored before them. Think too when you look at these books of the

labor of the men who put on the bindings, and made the leather, and killed the beast whose skin was used to make the leather, and fed the beast, and so on. Think too of the printer, and the ink-maker, and of the paper-maker, and of him who sorted the rags and of him who wore them, and of what he did in them and suffered in them, and think of his ancestors, and finally think of everything. For you will see that even a book the meanest of its kind is an epitome, or summary of all things; you will see that everything has its relation to every other thing, and that all things make a unity, invisible to the eyes of sense, but visible to him who has eyes of the understanding. All things, as the philosophers said long ago, are One; and so you may learn a useful lesson even out of a library without opening a single book.

I like to sit in a room with a few books with which I have been long acquainted. They are old companions. I have carried some of them about with me by land and by sea for fifty years. I know them well, both their faults to which I am very gentle, and their virtues which I try to imitate. They have been a comfort both in prosperity and adversity, the best friends that I have found. When I leave them, I hope somebody will take care of them. They are not many, and they have a very modest, unpretending look. They would be content with very moderate accommodation on a shelf of pine, or in a cupboard. They

would ask for nothing more than a little quiet conversation now and then. They are not dirty nor ragged. A humane man takes care of his beast, and a man who has the Humanities takes care of his books.

Some people cannot write without a crowd of books about them. They dig and grub, and scrape together tons of matter before they can do anything. I envy them not, because I cannot do it. Every man to his taste. I would rather write on the top of a tree, if I could perch myself securely, with nothing but my writing-stuff than amidst a crowd of books. If a man has nothing in his head except what he gets out of books, I think that he should not write at all ; but what I think is very unimportant. The man will write ; and the less he has to produce of his own, the more obstinate he will be at his work.

There is a serious aspect of this book-making business, and careful observers have not overlooked it. The French have a word *Prolétaires*, by which they mean the most indigent class, the men who work with their hands, whose work is uncertain and poorly paid. The word is Roman "*Proletarii*." The race flourished at Rome as it does in all great cities. The old Roman *proletarii* were a respectable class. They were armed at the expense of the State in times of sudden difficulty. They were not rich enough to contribute money to the service of the State, but they produced

children, which I shall inform the reader were comprehended under the general name "proles," and hence the parents were called "proletarii." So a learned Roman writer says, but if proletarii for ever went on only producing other proletarii, I cannot see where the business could end except in general beggary.

A Paris chiffonnier belongs to the class of prolétaires. You may see him at night and perhaps by day, but I do not remember, picking up bits of rags, bits of paper, bits of anything except pure dirt or stones, raking in gutters and dust heaps, and depositing in his hotte the treasure that he finds. These people form a body, a class; they have their code of honour, and everything else that belongs to a society or club. I never dined with them yet, because I have not been invited.

I have just made a discovery, which you may say that I ought to have made before. I told you that I should start somewhere and end somewhere, but I did not tell you by what way I should go. Indeed I gave a hint about turning often, which means change of course. I cannot finish this book business without first finishing this proletarian matter. It is very important that it should be done, and it is plainly connected with my subject, as he may see who has eyes and can use them.

Besides the proletarians who pick up rags, make

mortar and hand it to the artist who fastens bricks together with it, carry parcels and sometimes forget to deliver them, attend fairs and races, and do a number of odd jobs such as cleaning out cesspools and more than I could mention, if I went on for an hour—besides all these land prolétaires, and the sea prolétaires among whom I class some of our fishermen, there are the prolétaires of the pen. This word pen is the most general expression that I can find to include all. Though we hold our pens in the hand when we write, we do not call the use of the pen manual labor. It is assumed that the pen is guided by superior intelligence, greater than that which guides the hand of the skilful artist, an opinion however which is generally false and only true sometimes. I might add to the prolétaires of the pen those of the pencil and the brush, for their labour also does not come under the name of manual ; and there are the prolétaires of the stage, and vocal and instrumental prolétaires ; and the teaching prolétaires male and female.

I have read all the history that I can find from the first chapter of Moses to the present day, and I have discovered that in all ages men have tried to avoid hard labor and to shove it upon others. They do not like digging and ploughing and ditching and sowing and reaping and a hundred other things, which must be done by somebody. Hence come slavery and knavery and tyranny and

infinite devices for getting what you want and making others work for it. Perfection in this matter is reached when you do nothing for your living, and that is the vulgar notion of a gentleman, to do nothing; but do not forget to add, and to live well, for if you choose to do nothing and to go about in rags, you are not a gentleman. There is nothing new in this notion. Herodotus tells us that certain Thracians considered idleness to be the mark of a gentleman, but to dig the ground was most disgraceful. Like modern swindlers and pickpockets, robbery being now out of fashion, they lived on their neighbours and took from them what they wanted. Their nobility was indicated by tattooing their faces, which corresponds to our armorial bearings, crests and devices, and is a very good hint to those who use these marks to put them in the right place, where everybody can see them. These Thracian gentlemen provided for their children by selling them to slave dealers and putting the money in their pockets; and they bought their wives dear, just as we often do.

There is the same dislike now to work with the hands. Men will be gentlemen like the Thracians, but they cannot do as the Thracians did. By choosing or having forced on them a mode of life, which raises them in opinion above the rank of artizans and mechanics, and does not furnish them with a competent income, they secure for them-

selves a miserable existence. There is a large class of these poor men among the clergy of the Church of England. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the authority for the fact that ten thousand of the twenty thousand clergymen of England and Wales do not receive £100 a year: he means of course for their clerical duties. Above five thousand who have benefices receive less than £150 a year; and there are above five thousand curates whose incomes average £80 a year. Many of these poor men have no parsonage houses. Their incomes are much below those of skilful mechanics and artizans. Some bricklayers who are constantly employed on our railways earn £70 a year, without reckoning what they may earn by what is called overtime. There are many workmen, call them by what name you please, who earn two and three pounds a week and more. I wish they would save a good part of it. A young clever workman, if he is sober and industrious and saving, might be a rich man at fifty. He can dress as he likes and live as he likes, and he may both dress well and live well, and save money, if he is sober and frugal. The poor clergyman must be sober, whether he likes it or not. He has to struggle against want. He must pray for his daily bread and he is not sure of having it. We require no evidence of the particular hardship which many of the clergy suffer: the evidence of their income is enough. It is usual for the poorest

of them to be blessed with a very large number of children. I have seen a case of one parson who had twenty-four children, nineteen of whom were living when this gentleman's case was recorded in print. Another has fifteen living children. Both these patriarchs are Welsh parsons. I find a list of forty-three clergymen, selected out of many, who had applied for the admission of their sons to a school where they are taught free of cost. The average number of children of these forty-three clergymen is eight. These men would be most valuable in a new country where hands are wanted. The highest income in the list of forty-three is £300 a year, but it stands alone, and this case received consideration only for special reasons. The lowest income in the list is nothing. The average income of the forty-three is £100 a year: and this is a much higher average than we should have if we omitted about one-fourth of the forty-three, whose incomes are above £150. There are many cases in the books, as the lawyers' phrase is, of curates with incomes of £40 and less, and some out of employment with no income at all. These poor men receive occasional help from friends, parishioners, and a few from the Poor Clergy Relief Society, and in fact from many quarters. But the condition of the present generation is hopeless. All that we can expect is that they will have no successors.

The thing is easily explained. We do not find

any men so poor either among the medicine men or the law men. If the men of either of these classes were reduced to the condition of many of the clergy, they would cease to belong to their profession. They could not continue it: nobody would employ them. With few exceptions the men of these two classes live comfortably and many grow rich, rich enough to take care of their families and to give to others too. In these two professions a way has been found of not increasing the number of men beyond the public wants.

The lands and property appropriated to the Church of England service bring in annually an enormous amount. The Archbishop of Canterbury may know what it is, but I do not. Probably he would say, what is it among so many? The answer is, it would not be much, if it were divided among all of you; but it would raise the average £80 a good deal. But this is not all. There is an enormous sum of money raised by pew-rents in some churches and part of this goes to maintain clergymen. These churches may be private property or not. I am only looking after all the money which the whole body of the clergy receive. The clergy have also all the valuable endowed grammar schools in their hands, nearly all the schools, with very few exceptions. This has been done in some cases by fraudulent means, for the rules of a great number of these schools allow

a layman to be chosen. But the rules have not been observed and the practice is now fixed to give these schools to clergymen only. This has been done even in acts of Parliament, directly contrary to the intention of founders, which we affect to regard with so much respect. The clergy are also largely engaged in the instruction of youth, and a great many have boarding schools or pupils in the house. No clergyman is prevented from teaching or keeping a school, if he has time to attend to it and can find pupils.

It is said that it is one of the disadvantages of a clergyman that he is fixed in a profession which he cannot and even is not allowed to leave. But this is no peculiar disadvantage. It is not an easy matter in this country for any man of any profession or occupation to change his mode of life ; and for most men it is absolutely impossible. If the clergyman has the means, he can farm a little as some do, and also do it well, though possibly the bishops may not consider farming a clerical occupation. I think it is a very good occupation for country parsons who are not overburdened with clerical duty. If clergymen have money of their own, and there are a great many who have good private property, they may turn it to profit like other people. They obtain by becoming priests of the Church of England a certain rank, which gives them easy admission to society, and they have thus an opportunity of

improving their condition by marriage, which some of them do not neglect. There are also schools, limited it is true both in number and in capacity of receiving pupils, in which schools the children of clergymen are taught either for less than other children or for nothing. The clergy are also often helped or relieved by gifts, and large subscriptions when they are in difficulties, and this generous help is sometimes given to the families of clergymen who die poor. We might ask after hearing all this, what more do these men want? Certainly there is no class for which so much has been done, except it may be the lowest class of people, and the result has been the same in both cases, to increase the demand for help.

Yet it is still true that a very large number of the clergy are suffering from poverty and large families. They would be poor without families; and when they have children, it is not possible that they can have food or clothing unless they receive a great deal of help. Many young men are sent to college and brought up to the Church with no prospect of obtaining anything more than one of these miserable stipends. When they reach man's estate, they cannot change. They are fit for nothing else. They must take what they can get, and it is very little, as we have seen. They marry a wife often as poor as themselves. Men of other professions are generally much more prudent

than the clergy in the matter of early marriage. The layman here exercises more self-restraint than the man who is his spiritual guide.

This evil would be cured in the natural way, if it were let alone. Men would in time grow wiser, and the church would either lose its ministers or some means would be found for paying them better. But we cannot let the present generation perish, and I do not believe that the rich clergy will refuse to help these poor men most liberally, recollecting the precepts of St. James, which I will not quote, for they know them. But notice should be given that nothing will be done for those who enter the Church after this warning. If they are content with £40 a year or £50 for their labor, let their content be limited to themselves, and not shared with wife and children. If a man has a little income of his own, that is a different case; and indeed I think that it would be no bad thing if none entered the Church except those who could live without receiving anything for their labor. This rule would certainly deprive the Church of many able men, but they would be doing something better than starving. I assume that a man who has money and enters the Church does not want any money for his services. He will be ready to take the places where the work is hardest and the pay is little or nothing, until some means shall have been found of raising a reasonable income for every man who ministers

in the Church. I wish clergymen who have money would do so instead of laying it out in buying a living. A sensible man of their own body recommends this. They will find that buying of advowsons or next presentations is not a very profitable business; and I take it to be the "detestable crime of Simony," as the canons of 1603 call it, whatever favor it has under statutes or judge-made law.

We often read of what is called spiritual destitution, which means the want of parsons in particular places; but is this spiritual destitution cured by adding a respectable man and a priest to the number of the destitute? People should stop building churches and begin with improving stipends. More churches have been built since I was born than in all the time before, and the clergy have waxed greatly in number without waxing in comfort. If a new church is built and the parson is sufficiently provided, that is all well, if you do not at the same time call into existence a £50 curate to help him. Let us hear no more of the want of curates. It is the wants of curates that we should first supply.

After very long reflection I am sure that a regular, well taught, sufficiently provided body of clergy is one of the best things that we have. You will have priests in some shape, whether you choose or not; and if you have ignorant, ill-bred men and very poor men, they are of no use.

There are many excellent men and men of good acquirements in all bodies of clergy, Roman Catholic and Dissenters. But the Church of England with large possessions and two ancient and famous universities in its hands has more power than any other church ever had. This church has produced some of the ablest and best men in England, men illustrious for learning, and science, and for their generous liberality. Others among them have abused the Church, and made it a means of gratifying their ambition and their love of money. But altogether it is a body powerful in numbers, and organization, rich in knowledge and science; and one of the conservating elements of civilization. The clergy now prosecute every branch of science and learning, some of them even theology; and we laymen are thus secured in our humble pursuit of knowledge by the example of the clergy, who have married science, philosophy and all learning to their clerical profession. We shall hear no more in this country of any man being troubled for thinking or writing about anything that he chooses.

I have nothing further to say except to my own brethren, those who handle the pen. But I shall not treat of those who sit at desks on stools high or low, and copy papers, or write other people's letters or make out bills, or employ the pen in any other way than writing books. If they like to keep their hands clean, go about better dressed

than skilful artizans and dine worse, live all day long in rooms of foul air and work at a business in which they must spend all that they can earn, let them look to that. I must finish with my own class the scribblers. Scribblery (*escrivallerie*) is the thing of which I am writing. Montaigne said long ago: There ought to be some legal check upon silly and useless writers, as there is for vagabonds and lazy people: they should banish from the hands of our people both myself and a hundred others. This is no pleasantry: scribblery (*escrivallerie*) seems to be a symptom of a disorderly age. When did we write so much as we have done since France has been in confusion? When did the Romans write so much as at the time of their ruin? (*Essais*, livre iii. chap. 9.)

There is no hope that our legislature will do anything to stop the mischief among us, for many of them are book-makers themselves. They might indeed require book-makers to take out a licence, like pedlars, hawkers, solicitors, dealers in tea, coffee, tobacco and snuff, shooters of birds of particular kinds, and others; and they might also allow themselves to write without a licence, as they secure themselves from arrest for debt during certain seasons. This might check the mischief a little and it would bring in money, which the State wants very much, since it will spend and will have the money some way. Printers of books might also be required to take out a licence; and

finally the legislature might require a stamp to be placed on the title page of every copy of a book, a penny for every shilling in the price of a book and the same for every fraction of a shilling. To prevent any fraud, for I love to be exact when I am making a law, I should require every publisher to place in clear figures on the title page of every book the price of the same. Publishers and booksellers must of course take out a licence.

The paper duty might be laid again on all paper used for books, the duty not to be paid until the book is published. Every printer, publisher and maker of books will also pay what shall be called an income tax, which shall be estimated on the whole sum that the printer receives for printing a book, and the publisher for selling it; just as the bookmaker under the false name of income tax and out of the whole capital sum which he receives as the price of his book, pays the same amount that he pays as real income tax out of the same sum annually received from the rents of his manors, lands, tenements and other hereditaments, if he has them.

This is all that I propose at present. I offer it freely to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a help to his budget and to our fortifications. If necessary, and he will drop me a line, I will extend my plan so far as to save him all further trouble.

My reports from Germany inform me that scrib-

blery has attained a height, as they express it, in that country or sunk to a depth, I hardly know which, that calls for the most active measures of repression. In my travels I have observed that a good deal of land is poorly cultivated in Germany. As anything can be done there by the hand of power, I recommend simply a transfer of labor from the pen to the plough, or to the matches making business or the cutting out in wood, or anything.

As for America, the empire of Uncle Sam, who has entered on the career of conquest, borrowing and not paying, I hardly know what to say. He is gone crazy, and that is the whole in a few words. The United States have produced many excellent men, and good writers, rather more than we could have expected. I have a sincere respect for the simple, sensible old gentlemen of their revolutionary age. I have seen them: I have talked with them and I shall not forget them. There are also poets, historical writers, and scientific writers who are worthy of honor. But unfortunately the men have now lost their wits both in matter political and in matter literary, if I may apply such a term to most American books. No words can describe the scribblery in Uncle Sam's dominions. If he lays his heavy hand on the newspapers now, it is not because they are silly, but because he sees signs of sense in them. The literary trash I recommend to the care of the

President's Chancellor of the Exchequer. He may raise a large sum of money, if he follows my plan, for the President's subjects will read the rubbish : they will be content to go without their cocktails rather than without their railway books.

Scribblery is prevalent in France. The seat is Paris. There is not much done in the departments, where the people are better employed. But I have found in several French country towns a very good book by some resident or man of the country ; a real good book, a history of the town or place or something else.

There are good local antiquaries, and some bad, good local writers on natural history, and other matters scattered over France, and some of these good books are printed in the country. The French have really a taste for literature and science. I have, as you may suppose, a strong sympathy with the makers of good books, who cannot gain much by them. We have some of these men in England. They are useful : they love their work, and they care not for gain ; or if they do, they cannot always get it. They are not many, and it would be the more easy to do something for them. We might restore to them the masterships of grammar schools, but many of them might not be suited for that business. We might put them on the pension list ; but there is room for very few there, and the places are generally occupied by others. At present I cannot think of anything for their benefit, except to recom-

mend them to write something which will sell, if they can find out what it should be.

I am reminded by talking of grammar schools that I fear the acts under which the Ecclesiastical Commission works must have done some mischief. Is it true that if an old cathedral tumbles down, the house has no money to build with, and must go a begging? This cannot be the constitution of a cathedral church. It ought to have money of its own to sustain the fabric. Are all the cathedral schools in good order, or what is become of those which no longer exist? I assume that all these venerable churches were in their origin places for teaching boys grammar and song, as well as for religious services.





OF BOOKS.



I MUST return to my books, and go on with my business. If the reader is tired, he may go on with his own business and leave me to finish mine by myself.

Authors love similes and comparisons, especially when the things compared are unlike one another. I compare a man and a book. Books are good and bad, and so are men. A man struts about for a few years on the earth, gives himself prodigious airs, as if he were somebody or something, especially if he should be rich or a great personage as it is called, which properly interpreted often means a little worthless person. All at once he disappears. Other men put him in a wooden box, hide him in the earth, and forget him. So I have seen some books make their appearance with the sound of drums and trumpets, banners flying and in triumphal march. A short time, and you find

them in the second-hand-book-dealer's catalogue, and O shame to tell it, I have seen them in worse places than that.

A good man is always doing something useful. He brings up his family well, which is the most useful thing that he can do, and he leaves children behind him to continue his good work. Thus he lives again in his descendants, as the poet says. It does not matter much what the man is doing, if it is something useful to others, and therefore useful to himself. He may be a farmer, and improve the breed of sheep and of cattle, long horns or short horns, whichever he likes best. But he should not make his beasts too fat. No good work that a man does is lost. The smallest useful work will continue to be useful long after the man is dead and forgotten. Bad actions too do not die with the doer. Future generations suffer for the sins of their ancestors, and one great crime or act of folly causes the misery of unborn millions. So all things hang together in one unbroken chain, of which we see a few links, but the beginning and the end we see not and never shall see.

A book may be useful in its day, but as knowledge increases other books take its place, and the first is forgotten; and so with a man and other men. This happens to all books which treat of sciences and arts or other things which are in their nature progressive. But all these good

books, which have been once useful, should be stored up in large libraries, and properly ticketed, so that we may find them. An alphabetical catalogue of a library is necessary, but it is not enough. We should also have catalogues of books arranged according to the matter. It is not easy to make such catalogues, but it may be done so far as to be useful.

Out of these books other men shall make stories or histories of the originals and the progress of the arts and sciences which minister to the commodity of human life. But these histories must not be made by the process of compilation, which may be defined to be—and here for once I make a definition—the cutting out and copying out of bits here and there and fastening them together with a botcher's coarse thread. If you will look at some of our law treatises, you will see the very thing, a shapeless, disorderly heap of stuff, here a bit of what one judge says, there a bit of what another judge says, one sometimes contradicting the other, tagged together with no more skill than a beggar would use in patching his tattered breeches. And some of these books are very like the beggarliest beggar's breeches, patches of various colors and various ages, in front, behind and everywhere: the original breeches are gone: you only know them to be breeches because a man's legs are in them. So these books are paper, print and binding to hold them together; and no more. Of

all the book-makers in the world a compiler is the most abominable. He has not even the merit of being exact, for he does not understand what he is about.

He who writes real stories of man's progress in art, or science, or any knowledge which helps to make up the sum of our present existence, and does it well, sets about his work in a very different way. He reads, marks and inwardly digests. He selects his matter with care, and he rejects the useless part, and in rejection lies the skill of a good writer. The ignorant compiler may be as laborious, but not knowing what is useful and what is not, he loads himself with a heap of lumber under which no man can move. We have a wonderful book of this kind, "an universal history from the earliest account of time" in twenty thick volumes, which I do not believe that anybody ever read through except the writers and the printer's reader. I do not possess the book, and I would not put it among my books. I am sure that they would mutiny and kick it off the shelf; and it would then be transferred to the kitchen for domestic use. The good Rollin wrote an ancient history somewhat of the same kind, but he wrote better than our gentlemen, and he is so amiable and virtuous and so honest and so credulous that we almost endure him. I read him when I was a boy and thank him for telling me many curious stories, all of which I believed then

and some of them I believe still. Voltaire wrote a work on the manners, morals, if you like, and spirit of nations, a sketch of man's life, opinions, and habits in different periods of history. He had read a great deal, but his knowledge was often superficial, and it could not be otherwise, when his subject was so vast. He is blamed and sometimes justly for hastiness and inaccuracy, for his prejudices, and for looking at the mischief done by priests without taking a fair account of the services which religion and especially the Catholic religion has done. But it is a work of genius, an everlasting monument of the Frenchman's piercing intellect and sound judgment. He who can handle a huge heap of unformed matter and give to it shape and consistency, and present the whole in a pleasing and instructive form, has done a great work and deserves an eternal remembrance.

I wish some man, who is able, would write a history of the Christian Church. There are many histories of it, and histories of many particular periods. But it is still undone. There is excellent matter in many of our church histories, but we want a man to take the whole in hand, one who shall have no prejudices, if he can be found. It would be better that he were not a priest, for it is hardly possible that a priest can put off all prejudices. Nor would I wish to see a layman undertake it in a spirit hostile to Christianity, for

he would certainly spoil the work. The amount of material for the first few centuries is not large. The difficulty is in distinguishing between the true and the false, which the ancient ecclesiastical historians have left us ; and the false is a very large part. By a careful and honest examination I think that it is still possible to construct a probable narrative of the early Christian Church. If the man who undertakes it can carry us fairly through as far as the end of Constantine's time, he will deserve our thanks ; and if I am living, when he has done his work, I promise to read it ; and he must know that this is promising a good deal.

If I were to say that I desiderate Biographies, you would think that I had lost my wits, for we have Biographies now in such abundance that everybody is tired of them. A man can hardly slip out of the world quietly without leaving his biographer behind him to say a good deal that the man, if he were alive, would not like to be said. Biographies are more common than statues and more impertinent still ; sometimes two or three volumes of idle stuff, wearisome to read, and not instructive. These are not the Biographies that I want. I recommend the writers of these stupid books to let their friends or relatives retire quietly from this mundane trouble, and to be content with knowing that, if the dead have done anything useful, their labor has not been thrown away. We do want good lives of men who have done great

things, but these lives should not be written as soon as the men are buried. The work belongs to the next generation. Ye who must write lives, take in hand some of the illustrious men of past times, ransack libraries, dive into dusty manuscripts, labor at the truth as if you were digging for gold, and when you have got your gold, which is the truth, as near as you can get it, let us see your treasures arranged in order, in a comely form, well proportioned and complete. And do not fall into the vulgar habit of making your man a model of all goodness, and defending what the common judgment of mankind condemns ; nor yet strive to disparage him, which indeed is rarely the fault of a biographer. Let us have the man as near the life as you can show him, that we may learn to imitate his virtues and to avoid his faults. We have not done with Bacon yet, Francis I mean, and his life is worth the labor. We all know that he had a great capacity and merits a lasting remembrance. His character is the thing about which we do not agree. If all men who have great intellectual powers were also men of noble minds, Bacon's character would be safe. But a man must have observed very little, if he does not know that this combination of great intellectual power and nobility of character is rare. That is my experience. I do not think meanly of men's talents, as some affect to do. Certainly fools are not rare ; in this island at least we have a good

proportion. But the number of men of great ability, some in particular things, and some in many things, is large. But how large is the number of these men whose character is so exalted, so simple, so generous, unselfish and noble, that we can venerate and love them? I have found the noblest character in men of less intellectual power, men who have solid good sense, but not the capacity at which the world opens its mouth and gapes with wonder. I have my own opinion of Francis Bacon, which will not be changed. The man who wrote the address to King James, which stands at the head of the *Proficiency and Advancement of Learning Divine and Human*, was a mean parasite. Think of King James of England exalted above Caesar and Marcus Antoninus.

I propose a new book, volumes, many volumes of Biographies of illustrious men of all ages and all countries. They must be short. A dozen will not fill more than an octavo volume. They will be written by men who will spend a long time over each life, first in collecting and sifting the materials, then in writing the life clearly, well, in a pleasing manner. The purpose will not be to tell all that is known about a man, but what is best worth knowing, his acts, his labors, his endurance, his goodness and his badness too, and his whole character; not his character as characters are written now, a kind of rhetorical effort intended to show off the writer, but his character as

shown by his acts. These lives will cost great labor, and will bring in small profit to the writers ; and by this announcement I rid myself of a crowd of penmen who are always ready for a new job, when the pay is good. My men will be zealous honest men, who wish to be useful and they will work hard even for nothing. The lives will be like Plutarch's lives both in length and way of treating them. I have found small critics, very small indeed, carping at inaccuracies in Plutarch's lives, and defects of various kinds, men quite unable to see that his object, as he takes care to tell us, is the portraiture of man's character, and not history. If you will be at the pains to compare his lives with the facts as they are known from other authorities, you will find that he has portrayed his men truly, which is all that he intended to do ; and he has done it in such a way that his book will live when his critics are too far gone into oblivion to be rescued by any biographer.

The industry of modern times and of societies for the advancement of learning and science has collected and is still collecting wonderful stores of knowledge in transactions, journals and whatever other names these periodical publications have. After making the proper deductions from their value for the nonsense which now and then slips in like a well-dressed pickpocket in a crowd, there remains an enormous accumulation of facts useful to those who can use them. The London big

Book-house of course stores up all these treasures in some corner where a man can find them. I have turned over the leaves of many of these books with regret that I have neither the time nor the capacity nor the knowledge to use them as I could wish ; and few men can use these materials as they ought to be used. We are indeed much more clever at collecting materials than in using them. Owing to the defective education of our men their minds are not large enough to take in many particulars and out of them to construct a sound and solid entirety. Our universities are the places where men should be formed for this work ; but they are merely continuators of school work, and as matters stand now in the improved state of our schools a youth often leaves a schoolmaster who is a very able man to go to a college lecturer who is very much his inferior. The remedy for this seems to be, what I believe we are now attempting, to revive the teaching by professors, who not being encumbered with the drudgery of a lecture-room filled with young men many of whom will not and cannot learn, shall from time to time show the best students the way to use their knowledge and apply their industry. Certainly I am not in favor of making philosophers of young men before they have gone through a hard discipline of necessary and useful elementary knowledge, and we do right to keep our youths to those old studies which make a sure foundation on

which they may build up a noble structure. But we let many of our young men leave the universities with only a certain amount of verbal knowledge, and a certain facility in dealing with symbols, which they imperfectly comprehend, and we call this education. A man of sense finds out when he comes into the world that he is still very ignorant and that he has not even learned the way to observe and to learn. Perhaps he tries a German university, where he will find both good and bad. On the whole he will however learn something abroad, perhaps a modern language or two tolerably well, and that will open his eyes a little.

Our universities have a difficult task in the matter of education. The profit which a teacher can get there is not much, unless he undertakes the laborious office or drudgery of private instruction, which is a strange way of teaching in a university. The more men that come to our universities, the more money is made out of them by somebody, and accordingly all sorts are received, young men who come only to spend and amuse themselves, others not rich either in money, knowledge or ability, who come to take a degree and qualify themselves to be curates or poor parsons, and a few who having talent and industry seek for the honours and emoluments which are open to those who merit them. With such a body of students dispersed in different colleges and under

men of very different capacities and acquirements we cannot expect that a great deal can be done. The young men of ability do the best that they can by their own exertions and such private help as they can purchase. If they have not money to pay for private teaching, they must go without it. I think nobody will affirm that the instruction given by college tutors and lecturers is sufficient for the best students. There may be some colleges in which a tutor works hard with his pupils, because he loves his labor and does his duty. But if all college instruction were made efficient, it would require more of a man's time than most tutors are willing to give, especially as many of these men are only there for a time, and are ready to depart whenever a favorable opportunity offers. I see no way of securing the best teachers except by making the places so good that men will be content to keep them as long as they can work.

The universities will in time set all right and conform to the wants of our present society; and they will know how to do this better than anybody can tell them. When this is done, if a man shall wish to prosecute any branch of science or learning, he will continue at or visit our two old universities and listen to the great teachers, whose fame will extend from China to Peru. This time will come sooner if the universities will demonachize themselves as far as is useful; if they will

put the teaching of things profane into hands not spiritual, and so keep some of their best men to spend their lives there as teachers, instead of seeking their fortune in the world.

As to the theological part of the universities, I would maintain the monastic system, the celibacy of the resident clergy so long as they hold a fellowship. They might make themselves very useful as teachers of all the various parts of theological learning, as eloquent preachers, and by directing and guiding the young men by precept and by example. There would be no fear of any clerical hostility to profane learning and to science rising up in the universities, because the clergy discharged their proper functions and the laity discharged theirs, for the clergy in the universities would be the more learned body, inasmuch as they would study Oriental tongues as well as Greek and Latin, and they would take in hand all the gentile moralists and all the great speculative gentile writers before and after the Christian era, and would revive that ancient and solid learning which lived in our universities two hundred years ago. The laity would humbly work in their several branches of knowledge and would not envy their spiritual brethren, who in due time would be called to fill high and lucrative places, where they would enjoy repose after their learned labors. If any proposed reform should in any way separate the clergy from learning and science, the end of

which would be that they would be enemies to learning and science, being now friends to both, I would renounce all such reform, and let things go on as they do. But I do not believe that our universities will ever be what they ought to be, until there is in them a large number of lay teachers or professors, men who have lived some time in the world and know more of it than can be learned in a university, men who at a mature age will be called back to their university to spend the rest of their lives in the humble, but useful office of teachers and professors. These are the only men who will widen the circle of thought and send out young men with a few more ideas in their head than they have at present. If the clergy should be afraid that these men would weaken the Church of England, they are much mistaken. These lay teachers must of course be members of the Anglican Church, and if they are men of sense, they will support it with quite as much sincerity as those who receive from the church that profit which the layman cannot have.

I propose a great work to some man of ability. He must begin it when he is young and finish it when he is no longer young. We have a huge and curious body of literature called Law Reports. They begin very early and they continue now. If a man would take these and all our Acts of Parliament, which relate to property, crimes and all the varied business of life, he might make a his-

tory full of instruction and amusement too. The Law Reports are the chief matter. There we learn how people lived and what they did a long time ago, and what they have been doing and disputing about up to the present time; their lives and their quarrels, and their frauds and their tricks, their virtues and their vices, but much more of their vices, for law has little to do with men's virtues, and would have very little to do at all, if men had no vices. There we learn what learned judges said and did, and how they made law and then affirmed that it existed before it was made; and how they yielded to power and how they resisted power; and how one generation after another helped to build up a most enormous, irregular structure, which we keep up because we cannot help it. We learn too the political and moral notions that prevailed at particular times, and how judges, who are still like other men, were as ignorant and prejudiced as men who were not judges. We find excellent sound sense and the most incomprehensible nonsense, all jumbled together; great acuteness in examining into facts, discussing precedents and balancing opposing opinions, and sometimes an ignorance of the simplest principles of law which would have settled at once what these men sometimes settled one way and sometimes another way, till finally somebody blundered to the right conclusion, which was reached eighteen centuries ago by the Romans and was

only unknown to these judges, because they had not learned even the elements of law ; judges whose legal knowledge was as empirical as that of a quack doctor, who will prescribe without knowing anything of the structure of the animal that he professes to cure. You will read judgments of men who talked nonsense almost unmixed ; and the judgments of men who seldom spake without saying something true. It is the most wonderful, amusing mass of matter that ever a nation piled together. Nobody but a lawyer could handle it, and a lawyer could not handle it, if he were totally overpowered by the bonds of his art. For law is a merciless tyrant. It conquers and subdues the strongest heads. A man who has passed his life in the application of positive rules to facts, can generally do little else. His interiors are closed, and like a man long confined in prison his perception of all that is within his reach is sharpened, but his sense of all that is outside is dulled. He who has been able to resist this power of Law is a rare man.

My lawyer must be a man of taste and humour, with law enough to understand what he reads, and a little law of his own, which he must get somewhere else than out of Reports. He must attempt to show how much of the Law that we now have has grown up under judge cultivation, aided by the counsel learned in the law and the writers of law books and the usages of society and current

opinions false and true ; for out of all these things a large part of our Law has come. He will show too how some learned lawyers of past days, who were really learned, derived many of our rules of law from their Roman originals, such rules for example as relate to wills and legacies, and how ignorant compilers of a later age made text books out of these good old books, dropping all reference to the original authorities which they never looked at, and substituting their own ill-digested compilations for sound knowledge and true learning. My lawyer will season his work with particular cases, curious stories and apt remarks, and he will make a history such as we have not yet. When my man is ready for the work, I am ready to tell him how he should go about it.

I hardly know how to finish my books ; the matter is infinite. I love good books of travels whether old or new. Some of the old are among the best. We do not want to know all a man's adventures, when there are no adventures, nor his bad luck or good luck in hotels, nor what he said to somebody and what somebody did not say to him, though he tells us what the somebody said ; nor do we want his opinions, unless he is a very wise man, nor bits of French or German or any other language stuck into his book. We want good true facts, any kind of facts you please, if they are good and true. If a man goes up a mountain and finds something new, let him com-

municate his knowledge in any way that he can. If he has travelled over all the world and cannot see or observe and tell the truth, let him be content with his travel and hold his peace.

Let men write novels, tales, plays, poems as they please. Some will live and some will not. The next generation will settle that matter. There is little hope for play writers, even if a playwright knows his art. I wish however our men would make us some good comedies, not botched up out of French things, which are of no great value and not improved by our bungling. There is matter in modern life for a writer of comedy, if he knows how to use it, but he must have a genius for the work; and let him be sure that he has before he begins.

Tragedy writing cannot be recommended, for tragedy acting has hard work to keep its head above water. The fault is in our taste. We are music mad. Music is a very good thing in its place, but a musical tragedy is the very bottomless abyss of taste. People are mad after operas. They hear heros and heroines sing tragic scenes and they are pleased. I pity them sincerely for their bad taste. The Romans complained that their theatre became a mere show at last. Ours is become a mere sound, a merely sensuous pleasure, for I do not believe that half the hearers care for the acting however good it may be. A musical opera merry and lively can be understood; but

strains of sorrow and deep pathetic feeling sung, not said, can only be endured by a corrupted taste. The words are next to nonsense, it is admitted, and nobody cares for them; and so we get the pathos in the universal language of music. There is only one improvement to be made here, and it would be a real improvement, that the words should mean nothing at all, and the music-maker should put the universal meaning into them.

I must make a solemn address to school-book makers. I know what most of you want. It is money, and a little glory too. Money may be got in this way, if you are lucky; but the glory will not last long. Nobody except a Greek has made a school book that has weathered two thousand years. I wish Euclid could have secured a perpetual copyright. It might have helped the finances of the Greeks. Some of you who make school-books make good books. Most of you make bad books. They come thick as hail. How many grammars of the English language have we? How many books on arithmetic? How can the poor teachers choose, when there are so many? Have some mercy on publishers, and learn if you do not know it, that they cannot continue their business and pay authors, unless they can sell their books. Some of you think that they have inexhaustible stores of gold like the bank of England, and that you can have it by drawing a bill on them in the shape of a book. If you pay for

your own books, think of yourselves before it is too late. I entreat all of you on my bended knees with tears in my eyes to pause in your wasteful career. I may even put my entreaties in proper form to be fitted to music and sung on the stage. I say, Pause, pause, ye thoughtless ones : waste not your health and strength and your paper and your ink and your money : give us a little rest, half a dozen years of repose to examine all that you have done and to choose the best. I promise you that at the end of the six years we shall have made our choice, and we shall not want you any more.

One word more in ease of the clergy. These gentlemen make many sermons, and people like sermons. But they should be taught that preaching is not praying, and that too much talk on morality and religion does not make men think more of these matters. I propose that a man's sermons be reduced to one a week. How can we expect him to write two good sermons every week, or even two bad sermons ? Perhaps some preachers after having been long at work have a good stock on hand and preach old sermons over again, to which there is no objection if they are good, or if they revise and mend them. Sermons may be bought too, manuscript sermons, perhaps the work of parsons who have no church and do occasional service during clergymen's holidays, or of those ingenious men who write the tracts which you

receive by post from unknown friends, or as you take your walk they are slipped into your hands by men in black, who move off as if they were ashamed of what they are doing. The clergy might follow the example of Sir Roger de Coverley's chaplain and preach from the old divines, from South or Tillotson, or Barrow or Taylor, or the famous John Smith, if they can fathom his meaning, or from Butler and others who are full of sound sense well expressed.

These sermons are strong food and will not do for feeble appetites without some alteration. The best thoughts might be selected and put in easy language, and delivered in a simple earnest manner. How is it that we have so few good preachers? No man has so great an opportunity of becoming a good speaker as a preacher. He may practise twice a week, and everybody will listen, except those who sleep. One reason is because men do not labor at the work enough. Another is that few have a capacity for it. But out of twenty thousand preachers in England and Wales there must be many who have the power of preaching well. The first quality that is required is earnestness and sincerity, the next is constant labor at the art. It would be well if every preacher had a few honest friends, who would point out his faults. The bare reading of sermons produces no effect. They must indeed be read in a very superior manner to seem like a spoken address,

which is the only kind of preaching that has power in it to move, to persuade and to convince. But to preach without writing before you is a hard thing, and seldom done well. If however a preacher would well consider his matter, write down the heads of his discourse and keep to them, practice would give him the right words and the earnestness of his purpose would do the rest. But there is terrible danger of a man falling into mouthing, and saying what he does not mean to say, and rambling and tiring people ; all which shoals and rocks I mark out as a skilful pilot, that the ambitious preacher be not wrecked on them.

There is no occasion to print any more sermons. Can any man say how many volumes of sermons there are in the English language ? They would make a huge library. A French statistician once told me that the amount of religious books printed in England far exceeds the amount of any other kind of printing, save newspapers. There must be a demand for it, or it would not go on. But I have always wondered why so much is written on the doctrines and principles of Christianity and on good living, when we have it done long ago in a few books which we all refer to as our authority. So much writing about things that can be put in a short compass cannot be wanted. If the object of these books is to enforce practice, the object is good, but it is not the right way of accomplishing

it. We all know what we ought to do and what we ought not to do, and the best way of making this knowledge practical is not to talk too much about it, but to set a good example, which never fails to have effect as far as it is seen.

The most wonderful book that we have is a day book vulgarly called a newspaper. This book is common in all countries where printing is in fashion, and we could not do without it. Newspapers are daily histories of human life. They contain both facts and fiction. It is as instructive to read the advertisements in a newspaper as to discourse with all the people in the world. We learn from them what people want and what they are doing and how they are born and married and live and die. If any man wishes to know something of the United States, let him read the American papers and he will learn more than travellers can tell him, and almost as much as if he lived in the country. We often complain of newspapers, grumble at them and abuse them, and so we do with the women, but we cannot live without either woman or newspaper. The week book called the weekly newspaper or journal, or whatever other name it may bear, is also a necessity. We are sometimes misled by the day and week books, but we should be in a wretched plight without them. Their production is a wondrous combination of mechanical ingenuity and talent. Even the country week books are instructive and

they have greatly improved. A man may read all these books with profit, but he may be excused if he reads little of Parliamentary debates, except when they turn on taxation. Every man should look sharp after them when they tell us of debates on taxing, or how the public money is disposed of. The nameless writers in newspapers are sometimes a little hard on private persons and their affairs, but if they exceed the fair limits of criticism, the editor who is known or easily may be, no doubt is always ready to correct any error and to make an apology where it is due. In our modern society, if we had not newspapers, it is very certain that we should soon have no liberty. The Romans had no newspapers and the nobility rode rough-shod over the common sort, till the office of tribune was invented. The tribunes held public meetings and talked as long as they liked and said what they liked, and abused everything and everybody, sometimes with reason and sometimes without. Finally they abused their power, became corrupt and ended with destroying the liberty which it was their business to maintain. I hope the modern newspaper will not do the same among us, and I am not one of those who fear such a result. Whether the Frenchman, if he is unchained again, will be able to do good with his paper without indulging his destructive propensities, is hard to say. The American newspapers will give mouth again freely, when the reign of terror is over, and we shall see

whether a little restraint has mended their manners. I have hopes of them still, for I see that some of them even in the remote west act as well as we could expect in these troublesome times. But there must be an end of all things and of my talk about books. If I wrote a book on Books, I know it would not be read, even if it should be as good as the best book. I have one word of advice to give. When you make a book, do not give copies of it to your friends. If they are your friends and want your book, they will buy it. If you give it them, they will perhaps not read it, or if they do read it, they will find fault with it. Do not let them have the opportunity of laughing at you or sneering at you, without making them first pay for it.

One more last word. Make a fair copy of your manuscript for the printer, or if you cannot write legibly, let somebody do it for you. It is easy to revise and improve a fairly written manuscript. If you indulge in corrections on the proofs, there will be a heavy reckoning for you or your publisher, and it may run away with the little profit that will come out of your book.





OF PLACE AND POWER.

HE who has never filled high places nor held power can neither know all the pleasure that they give nor all the troubles that attend them. Those must tell us who have known by experience the pleasure and the pain, and they have told us enough, or their history has, to prevent a wise man from envying them. In youth when hopes are high and the world is untried, and we have health and strength and the confidence of inexperience, and life seems stretched out in a long prospect before us, and outward show dazzles, and reflection is feeble, and the whole man is still unformed and imperfect, how many dream of a great career, and of filling high places, which they could fill, as they suppose, better than those who are in them. But a few years cool men's ardour; they see the toil and the suffering, and the humiliations to which they must submit; that they must first stoop low in order to rise high;

and that after all what you will get is not worth the pains. They rest content then with something that is within their power, which they can have on easier terms. This is what men do who have a little wisdom. Others may continue the vain pursuit, or if they are forced to abandon it, they may lament all their life that they must remain in a place unworthy of their talents and their hopes. Most men of ability have some political ambition, except those who have an overpowering movement towards literature or some science or art; and in a country where speech is free and the highest places are open to all, such men feel some time in their life an impulse to strive for these great prizes. There are few who would not seize them, if they could; and if a man should begin life with a settled purpose to raise himself from low to high estate, he may accomplish it, if he has talent enough, if he looks steadily to his object, and never deviates from it, whatever crosses he may meet with and whatever arts of simulation or dissimulation he must use. If the goddess Fortune favors him, he may reach at last the object of a life's ambition, enjoy it for a few years, if he does enjoy it, and then comes death. Perhaps there may be moments of discontent amidst his triumph, and he may think how much wiser, better and happier he would have been, if he had been contented with an humbler lot. Cicero often complains of the difficulty which a man of common origin

had in rising to the honors of the Roman state, where the power was in the hands of the nobility. He made his way and with decency to the highest object of a Roman's ambition, and then he learned by experience the value of what he had got. It is true that he lived in troubled times, when the Roman state was falling into the hands of aspiring adventurers. Our times in England are more tranquil, and those who have seated themselves on high have little more trouble than to keep in their places and keep others out of them.

The philosophical Roman poet begins the second book of his poem with reflections on the folly of the man who pursues wealth and power so eagerly during the few years of his appearance on this ball of earth, and loses the simple pleasures which he might have with little cost and trouble.

'Tis sweet, when winds stir up and swell the waves,
To see from shore another's heavy toil,
Not that our pleasure lies in others' pain,
But not to feel the ills we see, is sweet.
Sweet too to view the mighty games of war
Along the embattled plain nor share the risk.
But sweetest far to hold the heights serene
Raised up and strengthened by philosophy,
Whence you look down on men and see them wandering
Seeking the way of life through error's maze,
The encounter of keen wits and noble birth,
The toils by night and day, the strife laborious
To rise to boundless wealth and place and power.
Oh wretched thoughts of men, Oh sightless souls,
In what a darksome life and hazards dire
We pass this little time we have.

Thus, as the philosopher says, men pursue and avoid things as if they would be eternal, and themselves eternal too.

By people in high places I do not mean all those who think that they are in high places. I have heard speak of men high in the customs, high in the excise, and other like heights. I can believe that these men are paid very well for very moderate work, while those below them are often ill paid for hard work. But as to the height of their places I differ from them altogether. They have ordinary duties to perform according to rule, such duties as require no more capacity than a common workman possesses, and may be done by anybody after a little experience. These men may receive any amount of pay, for what I should care, if I was not taxed for it; they would still be what they are. They may be useful in their place, and if they do what they are hired to do, it is all well. They are merely lucky fellows, who have laid hold of something that others would have if they could. They are in all respects infinitely below the man who makes a fortune by his energy and talents and perseverance. To settle matters with these place-holders, I must say that we pay a great deal too much in this country to a few of those who are employed in administration. If the true principle is to give no more for work than is necessary to secure its being well done, why don't we stick to our principle all through, and why do we pay so

badly a great many who do hard work for the public? One reason is that the whole amount of the money paid to a large number of poor labourers makes a very great sum, and large salaries to a few amount to a comparatively small sum total. Another is, that a reasonable number of good places must exist to satisfy the demands of a more than reasonable number who want them, and do not fail to make their wants known to those who must satisfy them. I do not believe that the honesty of all letter-carriers would be secured by any amount of wages, but it is certain that they are ill paid for very hard work; and the low pay may be defended on the ground that there are always men ready to do the work. I wish the same principle were applied to the Postmaster General. If he merely existed in name and had no bodily substance, the post-office would go on as well without him, and we should not have to pay him. The work is well done by others.

Nor do I number among those who hold high places, gold sticks in waiting or gold sticks out of waiting, nor any kind of sticks, rods or wands. I use a stick myself, but I do not employ a man to wait on me with a stick. If I saw such a man approaching me, he would know something of my stick before we parted. I do not reckon grooms among the men in high places. A groom is very useful in a stable. But a groom in waiting is quite out of place.

What a wonderful list of places and of persons who fill them appears in the books which treat of this branch of literature. I find, for example, a Comptroller of the Exchequer, but I cannot imagine what he does, though I am sure that he is well paid. I suppose that he controls the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as that must be a difficult business, he has an assistant comptroller to help him. At home and abroad, there is a host of people employed on the public business, some of them usefully employed, others doing nothing useful. This long list explains how some of my taxes are spent.

Popes, emperors and kings fill the highest places. The pope's seat is only for a few, and it is an uneasy seat. Indeed it never has been an easy place, and nobody except an infallible man could occupy it. There will be popes for a long time yet, but their power of mischief is nearly at an end, and we may hope that they will begin to do a little good. The places of emperors and kings seem pretty secure too, though the regular succession to these places is not as safe as it used to be. In the great French Revolution and the times that followed, kingships and emperors were the prizes of bold adventurers. The game is not yet finished nor is the drama of the French Revolution closed. When the play is over, if ever it shall end, Europe may have repose, and kings may quietly transmit their power to a long line of successors.

There may be an opening for a king or even an emperor in the new world. They have one in South America; and they have tried him in North America, tried him in both colours, black and white, but he would not do. It requires some peculiar stuff to make a king of, and the Americans may possibly find it necessary to import the article. If any man could predict the future political condition of the United States, he would show himself a very wise seer. Some say that the republican bubble is burst, and are delighted. If it is burst, I am sorry for it; not sorry because a bubble is burst, for that is according to the nature of a bubble and therefore it must happen; but sorry to see a people in such difficulties, and still more sorry that they comprehend them so little. It is an old story that nobody can understand American politics except the Americans. So they say. If we were as ignorant of their affairs as most of them are of European affairs and of all political and social science, we should do well to say nothing about America. But Europeans who have seen human things and have been disciplined by hard study and have learned to reflect, can judge of American affairs, and though we do not all agree in the matter, and some of us write with a little more passion than we ought, Americans might learn something from European opinions both on the side of union and on the side of disunion. After the separation of the Ameri-

cans from Great Britain, the several States formed a Federal Union, and it was necessary for their security. Wise men labored at the constitution of this new power, and made it the best that they could amidst the great diversity of opinions which then existed in America. These men saw the difficulties that might arise between the Sovereign States and the Federal Union to which the States had surrendered so much. Either the Federal government would be so weak as to be useless for its purpose, and contemptible; or if it was once well secured, it would grow in power, as power always strives to do, and it would end by reducing the States to the condition of subjects. If one government had been then established and the States had ceased to exist as sovereignties, it is hardly possible that the country could have remained united so long as it has been, for the elements of disunion would have existed in so huge and formless a mass, as they have existed under the imperfect Federal constitution. Or if the country had remained united, the Legislature and the Executive must have exercised a power as great as the Federal government must now exercise to keep the rebellious States in their obedience and the other states too; and this power is the strong armed hand which shall enforce the commands of those who govern.

The State governments were considered by the wise men of the revolution as the true barriers

of liberty in America. The Federal government existed for mutual protection and defence against the foreigner. But it was not difficult to see that it might and would very soon claim authority under the written constitution to do things which would encroach on the State sovereignties. It is not perhaps certain what Washington thought of the durability of the union; but Jefferson, who knew him well, certainly thought that Washington had not a firm confidence in its durability. It seems as if the Americans never had this confidence, for ever since the Union has been formed, whenever party disputes ran high a dissolution has been talked of as a remedy for the evils complained of or it has been used as a threat. Very early in the history of the Union the men of the New England States talked of breaking the Union and snapping the chain at the Potomac. This is not a solitary instance. The men of the South talked of separation even in the last century, and often enough since. The idea has always existed, and forty years ago I believe that in theory at least the constitutional power of a state to recede from the Union was admitted by a very large number of educated Americans, both in the North and the South. It is singular that the danger of secession was at one time most apprehended from the West, but it soon became plain that there was no danger from that quarter; and we have seen that the men of those Western States, in which

slavery does not exist, have done most towards the conquest of the South, and that without them the South might have repulsed the invaders from the Atlantic States. After the West has done and suffered so much for the Union, which now means the empire of the men who sit at Washington, I am curious to see how they will like paying the cost of the most costly war that ever was carried on. If they can fight so well as they have done and pay heavy taxes too, they are just the men to the minds of the Washington cabal. But if they would take a well-wisher's advice, they would have nothing to say to taxes. One of their western papers plainly tells the present Congress that the best thing that they can do is to go home, for they are only doing mischief, and showing a total incapacity for doing any good. This is wise advice. Let the President and his men fight it out, and settle as they can with generals, soldiers, contractors, jobbers, and all holders of their promises to pay.

If the soldiers are not paid, they must be content to be unpaid or they must help themselves. What is plainer? If the President does not conquer the South this summer, he must either go on fighting with paper so long as he can get stuff for paper; or he must stop short, and wait his time, and then begin again. If he plants his victorious stars and stripes all over the broad and sunny South, on its mountains and on its plains, on the

rivers and on the swamps, he will then commence the tax-collecting part of the campaign all through his wide dominions, and he will turn part of his army into tax-gatherers, though in truth there will be nothing to gather. He will make general and major-general tax-gatherers, colonel and captain tax-gatherers, and private tax-gatherers by thousands. As to the balance of the army, as the Americans call it, which interpreted into the English tongue means "the rest" or "the remainder," he will probably employ them in enlarging his borders from the Isthmus of Panama to the frozen sea. Thus he will gain more glory and extend the tax-paying area of his domains. The President and his successors will have an enormous increase of power and patronage, a great army always ready for action, and a great navy; and all this in the hands of one man and of the few who help him to do the governing business. When things are come to this pass, it would be mere useless trouble to elect a man every four years. It will be better to keep the man who has learned the business, and let him carry it on while he lives. If you will allow him to do that, he may save you the trouble of providing for his successor.

But the perplexing part of the business for the Washington men is taxation. They are skilled in that branch of it called customs. I meant to say that they are very ignorant about it, and so are most of the Americans. I intended to say that

they are well acquainted with the way of raising by customs a considerable sum to the cost of the consumers, when they might get a larger sum to the advantage of the consumers. But the Washington men know nothing of raising inland revenue taxes from a large nation ; and as I wish republican governments to exist both in the North and in the South, I shall not give any hint of the way in which I could raise the money. I am not such an enemy to liberty as to do that. Pray consider my good friends in America before you are involved in this taxing net. How are republics overthrown ? Do you not know that it is easier, when the means exist, to overthrow a republic than any other form of government, even if the people love a republic and hate all other forms ? What is the hand that does this work, which some clever head conceives ? It is an army. And how is an army fed ? By taxes. And how are taxes got without causing rebellion and insurrection ? By a general well ordered system of taxation on everything that can be reached. If the people have been used to taxation a long time, it goes on as regularly as a piece of machinery. If it is new, it will work hard at first. There will be much kicking and talking and writing ; but let a good hard taxation be maintained for ten years or so, and it will then move on pretty well. Your masters at Washington will know how to use all the money that is raised, and they will find plenty of men among you ready

to do any dirty work for money. You are a place-loving people, and you hate working with your hands. A clever fellow with money at his command will find thousands among you ready to help him to enslave the rest. Your masters, whom you foolishly take to be your servants, will flatter your vanity: you will be, as you have been, a great nation at home, and you will become, as your wise ancestors did not wish you to be, a great nation abroad. You will have a large army, a large navy, and a large fund for paying both, a good solid well established taxation. Here are all the means that any man can wish for, who would bend your necks beneath the yoke. There is no danger yet. None of your Napoleons can make himself your master, for luckily you have not got them; nor would any present Napoleon, if you had him, be able to usurp power. The men, who are to help him, must see the way to their pay. Mere plunder will not do now. There must be a ready fund, regularly provided to meet a great expenditure. But when all the elements of usurpation are provided, armies and taxes all over the land, and when the opportunity comes, and no one can say when it may not come, it is absurd to think that there will not be a man with spirit enough to pick up that power which is lying in the streets ready for the first bold hand to seize.

Perhaps you think this danger very remote, and hardly possible. But all your ancestors did not

think so. You wish to grow rich and to enjoy your riches, and quiet is necessary for this. Do you expect quiet times after your wars are over, though nobody can tell when they will end? But suppose all is ended in some way, and you are rollicking in your new empire, insulting everybody abroad and taxing hard at home. I think you will have an uneasy time of it, and the wise among you,—and I have no doubt that you have many wise and good men, though not in your high places—will wish to see some settlement of affairs. You in the North are approaching the condition of European States in population and riches. The rich countries of Europe cannot afford to live in an unsettled state, of which France is an evidence and England too. A rich country is easier reduced under a usurper than a poor country. Men have now so much wealth, that almost all of us have a little. We like to keep our comfortable houses and our furniture and our well-tilled lands, and our stocks and shares, and we should all submit to a good deal rather than see them wasted for want of a sufficient power to keep order. Property is more than life. It is that without which life is nothing. So I maintain that any rich nation on the face of the earth would rather yield what are called its liberties than suffer from civil discord which renders property insecure. If you now submit to a heavy taxation, you provide the means for continuing it. If you make the conquest of

the South, you will have a worse affair on your hands than your old father ever had with Ireland or India, and you may think it wise at last to return to some stable government, less corrupt than your general government must become with its increased power and patronage. You must have an arch-emperor at least, for I am sure you will not be satisfied with a plain emperor or king. Once more, my children, beware of Federal taxation ; be not deceived by idle words and false or foolish men : make not a whip for your own backs. You have shown great energy in your forcible attempt to obtain restitution of conjugal rights from the South : you have friends here who approve of your attempt, but, I who am your best friend, think you have done foolishly. If you could have brought back your sulky spouse with some persuasion and at a reasonable cost, you would have done well : but to spend such an enormous amount over her only to make her more peevish, to make your children for generations suffer for her perverseness and your silliness, and after all to have a prospect of eternal bickerings when you have dragged her back to the conjugal bed, which you have not done yet—did your father in all his follies ever do so foolish a thing ?

I admit the circumstances were difficult for you. It was hard with your little experience to know at first whether it was better to let your rich wife go off, if she would promise not to trouble you,

and pay for what she had gone away with, as she was ready to do, and then to see what a little time and patience and good humour on your part might do towards bringing her back ; or to rush into war and beat her into obedience. You have in this matter attempted to gratify your passion and secure your interest at the same time, an attempt which a man more than two thousand years ago declared to be impossible ; and yet you, who are so wise in your own eyes, do not know it yet.

I have still some hopes that the ready talent of the Americans will find a way out of the difficulty without the loss of liberty ; if they still care for that liberty, which they once had, and it was that which made America the home of him who had none. If the Washington men talk about raising huge taxes to keep up the national credit, there is a ready answer to that. If you repudiate loans and public debts, it will not be the first time that you have done so ; and you may ask by what authority except their own folly, any men or body of men have dared to fix such a millstone of debt about your necks. You have the power to refuse to pay, for you can send men to the Washington assemblies to execute your will ; and if you do so, you will set the world an excellent example of not paying money borrowed for foolish and expensive wars. If you are really in love with a big debt, big armies, the pomp and splendor of a great government, and care not for your State powers, take

your own course : I care no more for you. But I will tell you one thing. You have already gone too far for me. I thought that your fundamental theory of government was that it was founded on the consent of the people, and now you would found a government on the superior strength of one part of the States over the other. This is a new theory, quite consistent in the Austrian Empire with respect to Hungary, or in the Russian with respect to Poland, or in the government of British India, but quite inconsistent with the principles of your government. You may resettle yours if you like on the Austrian principle ; but when you are taxed, as I hope you will be, and as England once was taxed, and when the Washington men have the handling of fifty or sixty millions sterling a year, you will be greater fools than I take you to be, if you do not return to European political forms as well as principles. But my first hope is that you will recur to the fundamental principles of your own government, which is the only method by which a republic can be saved from ruin. If you will do that, I promise you shall have neither emperor nor king nor president with more power than emperor or king ever had.

In quiet times such as we have in England, the road to place and power is simple. If you belong to a family which is called noble and is not poor, and if you have great talent and industry, you may soon reach some good place. The House of Com-

mons is the field where you must first show yourself. I can give no directions about the way of obtaining admission to that House. I assume that you buy your first step in political life as some men buy commissions in the army, and I hope you have enough of your own to live on without looking out for place because some money goes with it. Once in the House, as it is called, you may wait your time, and it will come, for your competitors will not be many.

If you are in a low station, and wish to mount high, I can only recommend you to make a great fortune or to become a fashionable lawyer and enter the said House when you can. When you are there, your own genius will show you the way. You will choose your side, and if it turns up trumps, and you are ripe for promotion, you will have played a good hand. It is often wise to keep a neutral position for a time and to examine the ground well before you leap. A single speech at the right time may do your work. All lawyers who aspire to rise through the Commons' medium will of course study all the lawyers' lives which a late judge compiled, and study his life too ; and if they are as diligent and persevering as he was, they will have their reward.

I have a great dislike to political adventurers, by which I mean men who would govern us and make their living out of it. At that very distant time when all members of parliament shall be

Andrew Marvells and will live on two hundred a year, poor men may do our business for us ; but for the present I prefer men who are rich enough to live without the profits of place. I wish somebody would move for a return of all the visible and invisible means of support which every member of the Commons has. I want to know how much every man in the House receives of public money, whether he is soldier, sailor, place-holder, sinecurist or anything else ; and also how much he has by the year of his own. I have read lately of a man being condemned to six months' imprisonment, because he had no visible means of subsistence, and this put me in a little alarm, for I often go about without a sixpence in my pocket. But I have invisible means of subsistence, yet not so invisible as to escape the income tax man's sharp eyes. If there is any man in the House who could not give a good account of the state of his purse, I should recommend him to the court which put the man in prison on the presumption that as he had no visible, he had also no invisible means of living.

It has always seemed to me one of the wise arrangements of the things of this world, that governments in ordinary times can be administered by men of ordinary capacity. Indeed they are the best men for doing the usual business of administration, which is to keep things in good order and to be slow to change. In quiet times great elo-

quence or great ability or great originality is a hindrance to administration, and men who have these qualities are not wanted. Those who govern have only to be as honest as they can and to let things go on in the regular course. If any change is wanted, they are sure to hear of it, and they will resist making it till they see that they can resist no longer. Resistance is their rule, and it is a safer principle than readiness to try new things. There are thousands of men in the country competent in respect of ability to fill any place in it, but they are not all competent in respect of practice, which only comes by long experience. I am very well content with those who take the trouble to manage our affairs. They do it quite as well as those would do it who grumble and abuse them. There is in fact nothing but the money voting business which causes me any trouble in our present system. I should like some means to be contrived that no man who votes for the expenditure of public money should receive any of it. This is a sound principle, but the application of it would be difficult.

The highest places are those of peers of the realm, who have legislative power, because they are the heirs of their ancestors. This august body would be in a poor plight if it were not strengthened by new men. How many have I seen in my life-time raised to this highest pitch of earthly honor. If we had the biographies of all who have

been made peers of the realm within the last hundred years, it would be a useful manual for those who wish to sit among the Lords. We should learn how these men lived, and what great things they did and finally how they were rewarded. This work would be a British Plutarch. I daily read the acts of this illustrious assembly, and I see with surprise the small number of actors. Perhaps some of the body play the part of hearers and spectators, and so the drama is duly performed. But if these men really do and say no more than we read of, their occupation is small. They have no doubt many other uses ; but I am speaking of them as a legislative body. It is my wish to see them improved, at least until the Commons have attained that perfection of wisdom to which they are advancing surely, but still at a slow pace. When that time comes, one body of wise men may be as good as two, and the Commons may do all our business. In the meantime this Upper House must be more active. I wish they would begin to look after the expenditure without troubling themselves about what the Lower House says. They must now bear a large burden of taxation and I hope their burden will be heavier. Let them look to it. Why do not the life-peers, the bishops, stir themselves and not pretend to limit themselves to ecclesiastical matters, which laymen can settle as well as themselves ? I think of creating a couple of score more of life-peers, men of property, sense,

and energy who will put new life into this body and make it more worthy of respect. There are reasons which may be urged against increasing the number of life-peers, but there are stronger reasons for it. When a father of some capacity has worked up his way into this dignified assembly and left a son to wear his coronet, we generally find that he is a blank, a cipher ; but he has a vote and this cipher is potent when it is placed after figures which have a meaning. Men cannot transmit their virtues ; and so we are obliged to make up for Nature's failures by a continual creation of new peers, who leave other ciphers behind them ; and so it goes on.

The Roman Senate was a better body. It was a vigorous, active assembly. A man was first chosen by the people to fill high places and he was then qualified for admission into the Senate ; but his eldest son did not succeed him. The Roman Constitution fell at last under Imperial power, though the Senate still continued to exist ; but it finally became an insignificant body. All human institutions must perish, but the Roman Senate perished through other vices in the system than its own. If there had been no Roman Senate, Rome would have had a short political life.

I have not said all my last words, but I must stop. I am tired, and the English summer has begun, as I am told. It is my fashion at this season to look out for a place where there is little rain and some sun. What I shall do if I return home I cannot tell the reader, for I do not know myself.

June 12th, 1862.





OF EDUCATION.

I.

I HAVE said something on education, and I now intend to say a little more. Don't blame me if I repeat a few things. Education is a large matter, not easy to handle; but every man who has thought about it, and has had some experience of teaching, may contribute a little. A question has been asked, and it should be repeated till it is answered, whether education ought to be in some sort and manner a part of public administration; and this is what I propose to examine. But I shall first make a few remarks on such things as ought to be taught by all who teach, and which parents, if they are wise, will require.

It is a common remark, but not for that reason less valuable, that an enormous sum of money is annually paid for what is called education. But what is education? This question brings us to

the usual difficulty of a definition, which I shall not directly undertake. We have all heard about training a child in the way that he should go, and an assurance is given that he will not depart from it. It is not always true that a child will go on in the right way, if he is put in it; but occasional deviations from the general rule are no sufficient reason for neglecting to put children in the right way. Some children are born deformed; what we call monsters are sometimes produced; and it is certain that some children have such a depraved disposition that no training can make them good.

Can we teach children to be good, or can we teach virtue, as the problem was stated long ago? We can certainly tell children what they ought to do, and men too, and what they ought not to do; but the difficulty is not in telling any person what he ought to do or ought not to do, but in making him do or not do. I cannot enumerate all the things that a virtuous man should do and not do; nor can I give advice about many things which seem indifferent, neither good nor bad, though I think that it is wise to avoid doing anything which may lead rather to bad than to good. All true so far, you may say, but very common talk, and nothing in it. We shall soon see whether there is or not.

You may conclude from what I have said, if you are able to make conclusions, that if you propose to form a child's character, so far as it can be

formed, or to improve what we call the natural character, you cannot accomplish the end by words only, whether spoken or written; and the same observation applies to the teaching of all kinds of knowledge. It cannot be denied that in all schools of all kinds it ought to be the first and the chief object to make children healthy, good, honest, and, if possible, sensible, men and women; and if this is not done in a reasonable degree, I maintain that the education of these schools is good for nothing. I do not expect any man of sense, or woman either, to quarrel with me because I do not define goodness and honesty and so forth. Those who do not know what these words mean would know no more if I told them. Nor do I propose to make children good and honest and wise by precepts, and dogmas, and preaching, as you will see. They must be made good and wise by a cultivation of the understanding, by the practice of the discipline necessary for that purpose, and by the example of him who governs, directs, and instructs. If the example is bad, or imperfect, I need not tell you what the consequence will be or may be.

There are things called good habits and things called bad habits, and when habits are formed, the man's character, and the woman's too, is formed for good or for bad. Everybody knows how hard it is to change a bad habit, and it is also known that a good habit is not destroyed all at once; though things are so constituted that it is easier

to fall into a bad habit from a good habit than to get rid of a bad habit. The chief business of education, then, is to attempt to form good habits in children, to improve the understanding, and to check the formation of bad habits. That I may not dwell in generalities, and to show my readers that I mean something, I will mention a few bad habits which may be formed in all schools; and from the enumeration of bad habits we may form a notion of good habits. Bad habits, which must be resolutely conquered, are—laziness, want of attention, slovenliness in person and in other things, unpunctuality, lying, stealing—not quite so rare as some may suppose—filthy talking, much reading of silly story-books, bullying young and feeble boys, and other things which I need not mention. These bad habits must be conquered or checked, or not allowed to appear, by a proper discipline, which shall teach the virtues, not by preaching and lecturing, but by making the children avoid the bad, and by constantly employing them in doing something good. For virtue, as the ancients taught, consists in activity, in doing, not in having fine notions in your head, but in doing daily what you ought to do, and so acquiring good habits.

The foundation of a good school system is method, order, discipline; and these are the means by which we make useful soldiers out of very common material, with the aid of officers who are

not better than average men. If you are looking for a school either for boy or girl, learn, if you can, that every thing is managed with decency, propriety, and regularity ; that the government is neither careless nor too meddlesome ; that the rules are founded on good sense and experience, that the administration is marked by good temper and mildness, and that regulations are enforced by an inflexible resolution to command obedience. Men and women of ordinary abilities can and do form and direct such schools, and generally do it better than those who really have, but more frequently are only supposed to have, great abilities. But my model men and women teachers have something which the others have not : they have a character plain and pronounced, as we say : they have a purpose, an end in their system of education ; and what is education ? what is human life without some purpose or end which may be attained by industry, order, and the exercise of moderate abilities ? Great abilities are rare, and they are often accompanied by qualities which make the abilities useless to him who has them, and even injurious to society.

Parents generally choose a school for other reasons than those which I have recommended. They follow opinion or common report without inquiry, like a flock of sheep which follow a leader in scrambling through a hedge. They are dazzled by show, by the reputation which a few

clever boys fix on a school. They do not know, or if they know the fact, they will not care to make use of it, that the number of boys out of one hundred, who have great or even good abilities, is small; and yet many parents suppose that their own dear children may be in this small number, and will some day gladden the parental heart by victories, prizes and other juvenile triumphs.

We have no statistics yet which enable us to say how many boys out of one hundred are so idle and stupid that they learn next to nothing; but, as in the rates of marriages, births, and deaths, we may be sure that the number of such boys is nearly a constant quantity, and increases only with the increase of population. These boys are often the children of rich parents who have made money, and the unhappy boys have discovered or thought that it will not be necessary for them to work for their bread. They are certainly better placed in a good school, or in any school, which is not bad, than if they were kept at home. They learn a little of human life by rubbing about among other boys, and an occasional threshing, when they deserve it, will do them good. I have heard it maintained that it is always the teacher's fault if a boy does not learn, even a stupid and idle boy; but I leave the decision of this matter to the "*communis sensus*," the common intelligence of mankind. These idle and stupid boys perform one useful part in a

school: they help to maintain it by the money which is paid for them, and they get in return for their money what they are capable of receiving.

The number of clever boys in a hundred, as estimated by the standard or measure of cleverness now in use, is, as I have said, small; but I do not know how many they are, nor does any person know. These are the boys who obtain prizes of various kinds, scholarships at the universities, and other distinctions by superior abilities and industry. Their success in life is not always equal to the expectations which they have raised, but I do not stop to inquire why this happens. Nor do I trouble myself much about their education, though a good education will help them, and a good master will do for them all that he can. I suppose these boys to have superior abilities, industry, without which abilities are useless, and a reasonable amount of prudence and good behaviour: when they have attained a certain age, they can take care of themselves in a manner, and when the time comes, they will show what they can do.

The material which remains after subtracting the stupid and the clever, is much the greater part of the hundred. It is the material on which the master must most diligently practise his art: it is a stuff not uniformly of the same quality; some is moderately good, and none very bad. It

is wonderful and very pleasing to an honest master to see how this average material can be improved; and this improvement is the certain proof that education can do much. When we deal with the few clever, or the more numerous stupid, we are not so sure of the power of our art. Out of these average boys, if they are well brought up, come some of the most useful men to society, and sometimes great men; for the apparent dulness or slowness of some boys is only apparent: they do not apprehend quickly, because they see difficulties which sharper boys do not see, but when they emerge from the hide-bound state, they go on at a great rate, soberly and steadily. These boys become the men whom we trust, or ought to trust, with weighty matters, and not put them in the hands of men who can talk for ever, and write fine things, and do nothing without blundering; whose great capacity, when they have it, is spoiled by vanity, arrogance, and that self-conceit which besets all of us in some degree, and has turned more clever brains to folly than even good fortune and the flattery of interested knaves.

Tell me, good master, you may say, where shall I find these model schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, that I may send to them my dear sons and daughters, with a certainty that they shall not be made worse, and may be made better. I am sorry to answer that I cannot say where you will find them. They are perhaps not very nume-

rous yet, though I believe that they do exist; and they will become more numerous as soon as you fathers and mothers shall have sense enough to let them know what you wish to be done for your children. Consider what you want, or ought to ask for, and demand it; and I think it may come in time. We have both men and women willing and able to teach many things well, and when your demand is reasonable, and suits their inclination, they will try to satisfy it; and when they do their best, you must be grateful and not complain of trifles, nor grudge your money when you get something for it which is more valuable to you and your children than silver and gold.

If you have a boy to educate—I shall say nothing about girls; I leave that business to some of our women, who will handle it better than I can, or worse—when it is a boy, consider, and you can't do so too early, what he must do when he is grown up. Most boys must earn their living in some way, and they should have the education which will enable them to fit themselves for any common occupation, for you must know, and if you don't know I tell you, that average boys have generally no very strong turn for particular arts, sciences, or professions. They are the persons who can learn to do most things passably well, and of such are most of us, and nothing more. These boys must be taught those elements of knowledge without which they can

have no knowledge, no power of self-improvement. They must learn to write a legible hand, spell well, write a story or a statement of facts in a clear way, and have a reasonable expertness in arithmetic and a perfect understanding of the operations which they perform. This seems very little, but little as it is a great many boys, whose education is most expensive, cannot do it. Shame to their teachers, more shame to their parents, to allow these boys to be blundering for years about Latin and Greek, when they cannot use the simplest instruments for acquiring knowledge. I affirm, and I know, the fact that a sensible boy who learns at school no more than I have just stated, who has prudence and good conduct, may, after a struggle of a few years, put himself in some place where he will get a decent living, and at the same time improve his small acquirements; ay, and in time become rich, and what is better, a most useful man to society. I say "may improve his small acquirements," and he can. Have we not at present a very large number of cheap books on all kinds of subjects, many of them not only cheap but good? Have not our young men and women wonderful opportunities of self-improvement, such as their fathers and mothers, or grandfathers and grandmothers had not? I am daily more amazed at the ignorance of grown-up men and women, called gentlemen and gentlewomen, who, with so many means at their command, are

little better than Hottentots in disguise. Part of their misfortune is no doubt due to native stupidity, of which I think this island produces a great deal, but the article is common enough in other countries too. These people may read a newspaper, which is the best thing that they do read, for they may learn much from a newspaper if they read no more than the advertisements. But the chief reading of these silly people is stories, tales, novels, and works of some kind of fiction, and not even the best works of the kind. They are very much in the state of those who commit excess in strong drink, and I recommend the United Kingdom Alliance to look after them. The deplorable condition of many of our people on whom much money has been spent is mainly owing to their wretched education, during which they have tasted of many things, but have relished nothing, learned nothing well, and have been turned out with the unhappy conceit in their heads that they have been educated, because they think that they have learned something.

In old times in this country reading and writing were taught, and I assume a little reckoning, some Latin and song, which in the old Roman Catholic times was often taught by the priest in the chantry, and I suppose was also taught after the Reformation in some schools named Grammar Schools, at least the rules of some of these schools required song to be taught. If we look at the

number of things now taught, as shewn by advertisements and examinations, we find a very formidable list—a list of things, so many and so diverse, that it seems impossible that they should be learned well—impossible that boys, in most cases, should really understand what they are supposed to learn. It is an undoubted truth that, if a thing is not learned well, there is more harm done than good acquired. The amount of our school learning can never be very great, and the value of it is allowed by all good judges to be in the discipline by which we learn, in the strengthening of the mental powers, and in the formation of character. He who learns even one thing well acquires a measure by which he may estimate himself and others: he knows what he does know, and he knows that he does not know that which he does not know. He is not deceived about himself, nor does he attempt to deceive others, nor is he likely to be deceived by others. He has attained the one sure element out of which improvement will come. All the knowledge, which we attempt to acquire and which we do really acquire, is the foundation of our character and the safe foundation on which must rest all that we shall learn afterwards and all that we shall do.

It is almost useless to warn against this multiplicity of subjects which now distract boys and perplex teachers. The experiment of teaching a little of all things must be tried: it is demanded

by opinion, founded on small or no reflection, it is required by competition for prizes, distinctions, and places ; and it is encouraged by examinations and the questions proposed, which direct in a manner the course of education. The preparation for these examinations is a forcing system, a straining of the memory, a loading of the head with more than it can hold, and much more than it can understand, followed, as in bodily excesses, by disorder of function, addling of the brain, and the stoppage of healthy mental growth. The weak, who work hard to obtain their object, are damaged ; the strong may suffer little or nothing, but they do not gain much. Those do best who do not trouble themselves about the matter, but do as well as they can and care not about success or failure.

There is certainly wonderful zeal at present in the matter of education. The great efforts which are made to improve it will probably, perhaps certainly, produce some good results ; but let us hope that a few years' experience will teach us to expect less from boys, and to discourage these forcing systems by giving no prizes, no certificates, no testimonial of any kind, unless the examiners are fully convinced that a boy really understands, as far as a boy can understand, the matter in which he is examined. Those who, like myself were born in the antediluvian period, when examinations and prizes were nearly unknown, when

discipline meant hard flogging and very bad teaching by incompetent and often careless masters—must allow that there is now a wonderful activity in all matters which concern education. Sometimes I wish that there had been something of the kind in my early youth ; but when I look at the number of things which a boy must now learn, or is encouraged to learn, and when I look at the questions in the examination papers, I am quite content that I was brought up in other days ; and that if I did not learn much and was taught next to nothing, I have kept to old age the sense, whatever it may be, which came with me into the world.

The subjects taught in a school depend on the kind of school, and on the future occupation of the boys who attend it. A boy who goes early to some trade or business, will not require all the knowledge, nor the same knowledge, that a boy will require who is intended for the universities, or for what are generally called professions. But I think it is a truth, and an important truth, that the fundamentals of all school teaching ought to be the same, and I shall briefly endeavour to explain this.

We have, all of us, with a few unlucky exceptions, for which special schools are required, hands, eyes, and ears ; and all these members should be trained and practised in elementary education, as a means of improving the use of these organs, and

so improving the great organ which directs and oversees the work of hands, eyes, and ears, and judges of its own work and its own acts. All education which is in its kind complete and good, is the means of forming character, and of making useful men and women.

Prometheus, we know, found the human race in a pitiable condition. They saw, he says, but they really saw not: they heard, but they understood not: they were like the phantoms of our dreams, and their labour was useless and unprofitable. You may read how he set about teaching these poor creatures.

First of the ear, because it is most easily disposed of. The ear is made for hearing, or if you do not like this form of expression, the ear is the instrument by which we convert certain movements of the air into sounds, and if the proper conditions do not exist in the ear or the hearer, there will be no sound to that ear. Boys frequently do not hear at all when you try to teach them; the ear may be in a proper state for hearing, but the mind is not. I leave ingenious teachers to devise some means of finding out whether their pupils do hear or not: I am sure that they frequently do not hear, when they ought to do. This is commonly called want of attention; but I think that there are several ways in which this imperfect use of the ear may be roused to greater activity.

Every man who observes, must have seen what bad listeners most people are. Inability to attend carefully to what is spoken is a great defect, which leads to blunders, misrepresentation, and sometimes to quarrels. A few have a great power of listening and attending, but they are only few, and this power gives them a superiority over those who cannot attend. The inability to listen and to attend is of course a mental defect; but habit may make the defect so great, that a man's ears may almost lose the faculty of hearing what another man says, and he may be able to hear only the sweet sound of his own voice. Such incapable people are generally great talkers, very tiresome, and bad companions. They cannot be debaters in public assemblies, and can only deliver themselves of their own words. A man who attempts to debate when he cannot listen must make a wretched display of impotence.

The power of attending to what is spoken, or in other words the power of listening, is one of the most useful habits that we can acquire; it keeps the mind active, and we can thus learn not only by hearing, but by reading and reflection, by fixing our minds steadily on the matter which we wish to master. It is in some degree, and in a great degree, the sure means of success in all that we undertake; and if the power is not acquired early in life, great labour will be necessary to acquire it afterwards. This power of attention is

that which perhaps more than any thing else distinguishes those who do great things from those who can do nothing well.

I have read that England was once a great singing country, and I have been told that we English have good voices for singing. But the practice was nearly dropped for a long time. All that I can remember of singing in the first years of this century is psalm singing, particularly the old hundredth and Christmas carols, and now and then an oratorio in some large town. I am not musical, as we say, but I like to hear the human voice either reading, speaking, or singing well, and I am much delighted with the revival of song. It is a pleasant amusement, the teaching of it is a good discipline, and I can see no objection to it at all, if we don't do too much of it. It is a great pleasure to many boys; it helps to pass away some dull hours. I hope that it is always taught well, and that boys learn their notes accurately. We have Aristotle's authority and his reasons for teaching music (*Pol.* viii. 5).

When we see what a wonderful instrument the hand is, I think we are great fools for not learning to use it better. A parrot can make a use of his beak and feet, which are also hands, in a way that puts us to shame. A clever dog with his mouth and fore paws can do much. I have known him turn a loose door handle and open the door, and he can deal with a bone with great skill. Some

people can do little more than dress and undress themselves and bring food and drink to the mouth, which does the rest. Boys, without being taught, except by other boys, learn to use feet and hands in many ways, and they amuse themselves and learn at the same time. Those are useful games which exercise the hand and the eye at the same time, and thus do part of the business which the schoolmaster is too ignorant or too learned to do. Games are also played according to certain rules, and thus unruly boys are taught to respect order and discipline even in their play. I hope I shall be excused if I say that boys' play is sometimes the best thing that they do at school. But let there be reasonable limits to it. Moderation in all things is the golden precept; let there be excess in nothing, not even in book learning.

Writing is a part of drawing. I must come to this matter once more. A boy or a man may write what hand he pleases, but if it is not legible, I pray that his letters may never be read, and that nobody will employ him to do writing. A writing master, a master for writing only, is hardly necessary. Every master should require his boys to write a clear hand in their exercises, and he must not require much at a time from young boys. I have known masters who have, as a punishment, required boys to write out hundreds of lines at a time, and the consequence was that

a boy who wrote a decent hand soon spoiled it. If I had the power I would administer to such masters a good birching. If they will lay on impositions, let them require a little writing done with great care.

All boys and girls should learn to draw. I don't mean the copying of coloured drawings and daubing paint on paper: they may come to that some time if they show a turn for it. I mean the drawing of straight lines, horizontal, perpendicular, and at all angles with the horizontal, figures bounded by straight lines, figures geometrical, such as triangles and squares, and the copying of objects the visible boundaries of which are determined by straight lines, as a common box or a room. They may make plans also of a room or a building, or anything else; they may draw outline maps, which they must of course copy from other maps. They must be taught to draw as near as they can straight lines of a definite length, one inch, two inches, and so on to twelve inches, commonly called a foot. I require no more than this. They must be taught clearly to understand what is meant by a scale. If they draw a plan of a room they must measure it, and they must understand how much line in the room, how many feet, for example, are represented by an inch or half an inch on paper. If they do not understand this, a most valuable part of the instruction will be lost.

I don't demand more than this for all schools. There are boys and girls who have a great talent for drawing, and it will soon show itself. The discipline of drawing straight lines will train the hand a little, and will give the eye the power of observing and judging of distances, magnitudes, and some notion of heights. If rectilinear drawing is properly taught, children will learn something of perspective without knowing that they are learning; and when they meet with this hard word, and are told what it means, they will be pleased at finding that they understand it, which is more than some people do who use the word. By drawing an object the children will also learn a fundamental doctrine of philosophy; but I don't recommend letting them know what the doctrine is. They will discover it some time. We do not draw objects as they are: we draw them as they seem to be. To the eye things are what they seem to be, but they are in reality, if you know what that means, something else.

The eye is the great instrument of acquiring knowledge; or, if you do not use it well, a great instrument of deception. Through this wonderful instrument there is something which looks out, and spies and examines things; but too frequently looks on them carelessly without examining. Some distinguished philosophers think that boys' eyes should be taught or trained to the examination of objects: in other words, that boys should

be taught to observe things and to see likeness and difference. It is done to some extent by all boys: their games teach them something, and they know a cake from an apple. But the power of careful, patient looking at a thing is not fully acquired without some pains on the part of a teacher. When a boy reads aloud, he must look carefully at the words and letters, or he will blunder. This is an instance of observation. But the philosophers mean, I believe, that we should introduce certain things called sciences into school teaching; not that the sciences should entirely take the place of the staple Latin and Greek, and arithmetic, geometry, and the mathematics—a term which I assume that you understand in some way, but that these sciences, or the elementary part of them, should be introduced into schools.

I cannot assent to the philosophers' proposal without certain limitations and explanations. I agree with them that the eye should be taught, and I add, the understanding at the same time. I agree that boys should be taught to observe things carefully, but I have not yet determined how this should be done. What I would propose would not satisfy these gentlemen: and what some of them propose does not satisfy me.

If anything is well taught—I will take Latin for example—a boy is easily led to see, indeed he cannot help seeing, certain resemblances in words.

The first part of words may differ from one another, but the tails or endings may be the same ; and a boy easily learns to observe these like endings and to see also that they add to or qualify the meaning of the words to which they are attached. This fact appears in our own language, and the observation of likeness and unlikeness of this kind may be taught in the humblest schools. It is a very potent method of forming boys to observe, to distinguish and to classify. I have said enough for those who understand the business, and enough, I hope, to lead those who have not practised this method, to inquire further about it.

But what must we do with these sciences in schools—I mean the elementary part of them ? for I hope that the philosophers know a fact which I have already laid down, that the amount which we can teach in a school to the ordinary kind of boys, that is the very great majority, is not much. If the philosophers do not know this, they are unfit to discuss the question, and are not worth arguing with. I have already spoken of a small number of clever boys in a school, who can learn anything, and will learn something, whether you teach them or not. I write as a man should write who deals with realities and not with dreams—who is looking after the great body of boys, and not the very stupid or the very clever.

We must certainly do something in our schools

to help the faculty of seeing, not forgetting at the same time the faculty of understanding. We must do something to lead boys to look at the wonderful objects by which we are surrounded, and to examine them carefully. I don't think that lectures are of much use. They will now and then amuse, and may teach boys a little; and if the lectures are followed by examinations, they will teach more. But real learning, as I have said or hinted, is a thing in which the learner is not a receiver only of words written or spoken: he must be a doer, as a boy is who learns his Latin Grammar: he must work at it. If he is learning what virtue is, or whatever name you choose to give to right behaviour, he must learn by doing, by practising, by being reproved when he does wrong, and being punished when it is necessary. If he learns the elements of any science of any kind—the name science is rather abused, I think—he must learn by listening to a teacher, by reading, by seeing, by handling, by trying, by blundering, and by being set right.

I am not a man of science, and I do not wish to be thought so. If I were, I would rather not have the name. There are men, named men of science, for whom I have great respect; there are many for whom I have no respect. Not being a man of science, I do not presume to say what elementary sciences should be taught in all schools; but I will say what I think, and with all humility I say it.

We cannot work without matter to work on, and we must look round and see what there is. There is a material which will never fail. It is perhaps eternal, at least for us. It costs nothing, and it is everywhere. Raise your eyes on a clear night and look at the magnificent spectacle of the starry heavens, of the moon riding in her majesty, and gladdening, as Homer says, the heart of the shepherd. Would it be asking too much to ask masters occasionally to direct their pupils to the observation of the most splendid sight which the sons of men have had before their eyes ever since they have trod the earth?—to point out the position and tell the names of some of the brightest of these wondrous objects; to show the apparent motion of these bodies, to point out the polar star, and to lead by slow and sure steps to the conclusion which the genius of man has drawn from this apparent motion, and other considerations. The moon grows and wanes once a month. Could we not teach a boy to watch the curious phases, to think about them, and finally to understand how it happens that we see her begin in a crescent form, grow to a full moon, and wane again, as Sophocles in a fragment of one of his plays has described it? Could we not, with a little pains, make a boy understand what conclusion he should draw from always seeing the same face in the full moon? and could he not be taught to observe the different points on the horizon in which the sun

appears to rise and set during the year, and what may be deduced from the observation of these facts?

Sometimes we see eclipses of the sun and moon. In the world's youth, or in antiquity as we generally but not quite so correctly name it, men were alarmed at these appearances. Herodotus, speaking of a solar eclipse, says that the sun left his place in the heavens and was invisible, though there were no clouds and the sky was perfectly clear, and it became night instead of day. In his simplicity he seems to have thought that the sun marched away for a time. In another place he tells a story of two armies which were fighting, and gave up the battle on the occasion of day being turned into night. This was a solar eclipse also, and he says that Thales of Miletus predicted it; from which we may infer, I suppose, that Thales knew the cause of a solar eclipse. Boys have a very confused notion of the cause of an eclipse, and many men too, who are not ignorant of other things. A man may go through the ordinary business of life without understanding an eclipse; and the value of knowing what it is does not lie in the bare knowledge of the cause, but in the discipline which is necessary for understanding the cause. It is easy to explain, and it ought to be explained to boys when such an event happens.

Finally, could not a boy be taught the elements

of astronomy at the sole cost of using his eyes and his brain ; taught slowly, certainly, and not wearied with too much at once ? Some would learn more than others ; but all would learn something. This is real science, real knowledge, which will make a boy wiser, and probably better too. He will learn to observe carefully, and not to be deceived, as we sometimes are, by appearances. The difficulty is to find teachers, particularly in the humble kind of schools, who can explain the elements of astronomy ; but if teachers were taught such matters, they could explain them to others, and some of the teachers would be better employed in this way than in learning and teaching other things. It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that children must have attained a certain age before we venture to give them lessons in astronomy ; but when they have attained this age, I believe that many children in the humblest schools will observe and learn as well as those in other schools. When children are younger, we must use other ways of training the eye to observe.

If we want a subject that is nearer, I think botany is the best. I do not mean classification of plants. I mean their structure, growth, propagation, parts, and uses. The classification will come in time, but I don't care how little of that kind is done at school. I make this suggestion with real humility. In the spring of the year

there is abundant material at hand, which may be got even in towns, for examining with the eye, and dissecting with the fingers. In country places there are greater opportunities of leading boys to the observation of plants—I use the term plant in the general sense—their growth and structure. I know nothing of botany or botanical books, except an elementary French book which I like very much; and I can do no more than suggest something by which boys' eyes may be trained to observation. I know no other thing which presents the same facilities in the way of material, and the opportunities of seeing and handling it. I have heard that a great botanist, who lived in our time, used to teach some village children to gather and examine plants; and those who are moved by my hint may inquire how he did it. I believe the story is in print. I shall say no more. I read when I was a boy, a story of "Eyes or No Eyes"—I think that is the title—and I have never forgotten the lesson. Let me entreat those who have eyes, and can use them, to consider what I have said, and to think of the best means of improving our education in the matter of eyes. It is time to end. Franklin once said on some occasion that in a ten minutes' speech a man may say all that is necessary. I suppose that he meant in the way of argument, for a long statement of facts is sometimes necessary, and then more time is re-

quired. I have found that the best sermons which I hear last from fifteen to twenty minutes, or half an hour at most; I measure their goodness by the length, or the shortness rather; for brevity is good and length is bad. I hope this sermon may be read in twenty minutes or half an hour, and I think that it can. If it cannot, I am condemned by my own rule.

If you remember what I began with, you will see that I affirmed that the formation of a good character is the chief object in education. I mean a good character in all respects; a sound understanding and good habits. I have not changed my mind. I have said nothing about religious teaching as one of the means of forming a good character. We are a Christian people, and the teaching of the doctrines of Christianity, as they are understood at this present time, is part of the business of teachers, each of whom teaches that form of Christianity which he professes, and in the way which he thinks best; for in these matters we have perfect freedom. I, who am not a teacher of religion, do not presume to say how it should be taught, so taught as to be practical. If you merely teach dogmas dogmatically, you are not teaching in the sense in which I understand teaching, which teaching ought to have as a correlative the thing called learning; and learning, as I have hinted at the beginning, does not consist

merely in knowing: it is not learning unless there is some corresponding doing. In whatever way you who teach may manage this business, I advise you not to trust too much to the inculcation of creeds and dogmas by words written or spoken.





OF EDUCATION.

II.

IN the first chapter of the eighth book of his *Politick* Aristotle writes thus : “That then the legislator should especially occupy himself with the education of youth, no one can dispute, for when this is not done in States it does damage to the polity (form of government). For a State must be administered with reference to the polity, and the peculiar character of each polity is that which both preserves the polity and originally constitutes it ; as, for instance, the democratical in a democracy and the oligarchical in an oligarchy ; and in all cases the best character is the foundation of the best polity. Farther, for every occupation and art there must be previous education, and discipline for the exercising of them ; consequently, also, for the practice of virtue. Now since the end (purpose) of every State is one, it is plain that the education also must be one and the

same for all, and that the care of the education must be with the State and not with individuals, as it now is, when each man looks after his own children by himself, and teaches them severally what he pleases. But in things, which concern the public, the discipline also should be a matter of public concern; and we must not consider any citizen as belonging to himself, but all as belonging to the State, for each is a part of the State, and the care of each part has naturally a reference to the whole. In the matter of education, as in other matters, the Lacedaemonians deserve praise, for they take the greatest pains about the education of their children, and that also as a public concern. That then there ought to be legislation about education, and that it ought to be made a public concern is clear; but what education is, and how it must be conducted, is a matter which ought to be known, for now there is dispute about the practical part, and all persons do not think that the young should learn the same things either for the purpose of acquiring virtue or forming the best mode of life; nor is it clear whether it is fit that education should be directed more to the understanding or to the moral character of the mind. But the present condition of education makes the inquiry perplexing, and there is no certain conclusion whether we ought to train the young in the things useful for life, or in the things which have reference to virtue, or in things

which are neither one nor the other ; for all these things have been approved by some persons ; but about the things which relate to virtue, there is no agreement, for all cannot even agree in their estimate of what virtue is, and consequently they differ also about the discipline for it."

Between thirty and forty years ago I attempted to show, by the consideration of the notion of a State or a Political community, that the education of all the members should in some manner and degree, which I did not attempt to determine, be under the direction and control of the State. We look after the members of this political body in a great many ways. We take their money from them by taxation. We feed and clothe them when they are in danger of dying from hunger and cold : when they break the laws we put them in prison, and whip them and hang them. This shows how much attention we pay to members of the political body when such care seems necessary. As the State then does look after the individual members to some extent, the question of education is simply whether this care should be extended further. My essay or article, or whatever it may be named, was perhaps read by very few persons except the printer's reader and the writer : but this has been the fate of other essays besides mine, and I am too wise to complain of that which may befall the best books. Our people in this island have good common sense, and usually come at last

to right opinions on political matters—but they are very slow ; they do not like dissertations or generalizations in which they are not presented with special instances : they must have facts bodily before them, and in time by some operation, I know not what to call it, these facts produce in them some opinion ; but they know not how the opinion is produced nor do they care. Most opinions, I suppose, are produced by a constant observation of the same or similar facts, or by certain noisy persons repeating certain things ; and there is really very little thought exercised by the great majority of us in forming an opinion. “ The inquiry after truth,” says Thucydides, and I quote the passage a second time more at length, “ is intolerable to the many, and they turn the more readily to the things that are before them.” Perhaps I may succeed in putting some of my former arguments in a different shape and dress.

Aristotle says that in his time each man looked after his own children himself, and taught them what he chose. In our times a great many persons do not look after their children nor teach them anything except bad manners, which they teach in the most effectual way by their own bad example. Such children are consequently brought up in ignorance and bad habits ; and ignorant and bad people cannot do any good to the community of which they are a part, and they may do a great deal of harm and cause great loss and injury by

laziness, extravagance, drunkenness, stealing, robbing, striking their neighbours, and even killing them. I reckon that the profit which the community derives from the hard labour of some of these people, for some of them do work sometimes, when they cannot help it, is very much less than the cost which they cause to the state, which must employ policemen to look after offenders, and build prisons to shut them up in, and feed them when they are there.

Some benevolent persons think that when we shut up men and women in prison we should try to mend them, or, in other words, to educate them ; and there is some reason in this opinion, for these prisoners only stay for a time in the prisons, and are then let loose on society again. If they are no better when they come out than they were when they went in we gain little by this imprisoning of people who break the law. The punishment no doubt has some effect on them, if the discipline has been severe ; but the education comes too late for grown-up men and women. However, the fact of attempting to educate prisoners to some extent, as by the aid of parsons, seems to be an admission that education is a good thing for such people. When the offenders are young, and are put under good prison discipline, we may hope to improve them, if we can find employment for them when they have served their time. If we cannot, there is risk of their falling back into old habits.

If then we can do something for young children who have gone wrong, would it not be wise to attempt to do something to prevent them from going wrong at all ?

When the thieves and rogues become very numerous in a country, and we all suffer from their depredations, fraud, and violence, and then suffer again when we are compelled to find money to pay the cost of catching and punishing them, and when the mischief is constantly increasing, even if we allow for the regular increase of population, we may plainly see that, if things go on a little further in that direction, the State must be approaching that form of government, or no government, which is termed Anarchy. As far as we know the history of the world, every society has contained men who were at war with it, and society has defended itself by destroying such dangerous enemies ; and it has done right, if no other way could be discovered of saving itself. For the notion of a State is an organization which exists ; there is no occasion to inquire how it began ; it is enough that it does exist, and though often in a very imperfect form, it is a necessity, and we cannot live without the thing named government. The first rule then in every state, whatever may be the form of government, is the conservation of the State ; that is the rule for him or them who govern. If force is necessary for the maintenance of the government, force must be

used. It is an absurdity to suppose a State to allow itself to be overthrown when it can resist. It is an inconsistency and an absurdity to allow men to teach, to preach, to write, or to do any thing, when the direct and manifest purpose of the teaching, preaching, writing, or acting, is the violent overthrow or disturbance of the political system, of which these men are members, or some of them may be merely strangers, living under its protection. It is a gross inconsistency too, in a country where public meetings can be legally held, to allow men to meet in great numbers in crowded places, and walk the streets and put people in fear, and drive shopkeepers, who have often hard work to live, to put up their shutters, as they did in old Rome when a disturbance was threatened; or if the shopkeepers are not now driven to put up their shutters and close the door, their customers are driven from it.

We have some signal examples of the promptness, severity, and even cruelty with which the Roman Senate put down disturbers of the peace. In the declining commonwealth mobs and rioting increased, and the opposite factions used them for their several purposes, and thus finally overthrew the venerable edifice which it was their business to support.* There is little danger, perhaps none,

* “ Les astres ont fatalement destiné l'état de Rome pour exemplaire de ce qu'ils peuvent en ce genre ; il comprend en

that mobs and agitators, either in London or other great towns, will ever destroy an ancient kingdom, now converted by a long series of events into a modern republic, for such it is; but all threats and attempts at intimidation, and all public disturbances are a bad example, and do tend in the direction of destroying the Polity of which we all form a part, and which all of us, if we are wise, will attempt to maintain. Instead of labouring to destroy that which we cannot make, we should try to improve it.

Our own history shows a fact, which we may learn from all history, that political systems are always receiving change; and change in them is a matter of necessity, for the circumstances under which we live are continually changing. We require even new words to represent new things and new notions. When then I laid down the doctrine that in every state the first object is the conservation of the State, this rule in no way excludes progress and improvement, for the condition of a people may improve under any form of government except a pure ecclesiastical government, under which it appears to be impossible, as the history of the states of the Roman Church shows. In our own country then, where we have

soy toutes les formes et adventures qui touchent un estat : tout ce que l'ordre y peult, et le trouble et l'heur et le malheur."—MONTAIGNE, *Essais* III. Chap. xi. "De la Vanité."

the largest amount of political liberty, secured by liberty from arbitrary arrest, freedom of meeting, freedom of speaking, writing and printing, we maintain the form of Polity as the best means of securing necessary change and progress, and enabling every man according to his abilities to aid in transmitting to his children, with improvements, the liberties which he has received from his ancestors. We allow almost any thing in the way of speculation, argument and persuasion ; but we do not allow force or threats of force, or disturbance of the peace, either by politicians, who would make a trade of it for their own benefit, as I assume, nor by fanatics or madmen, whose good intentions, if ever they are good, do not justify means which the great majority of us pronounce to be bad. When these fellows break the law, we have a short method of dealing with them ; and when those who ought to administer the law don't do their business, we, who have some control over them, should try to help better men to their places, not by force, but by the ways which are legal and well known.

We live in a country which is as different from what it was a few centuries ago as one country now is from another, or even more different. It has been maintained that even the poorest are now in a better condition than they were two centuries ago and more ; and this is certainly true, for the poor share in the general improvement,

which has been effected by industry, by mechanical inventions, by the greater stability of society, and by the efforts of many able and good men. But our numbers have greatly increased, and it may be truly said that the condition of the labouring poor has not improved in the same degree as the condition of those above them; and the reason is clear. The occupation of many of the poor begins with childhood. Most of them are employed in executing a few simple movements of the hand or the body, which become a mere habit. They have been brought up in ignorance even of the commonest things which are necessary for the preservation of life and health, and their understanding is much less active than that of a savage who must get his living by the exercise of all his faculties. We have now an enormous population, chiefly in large towns, who live on the wages of daily labour, and some of them barely live. These people are the instruments by which rich men can make themselves richer, and if they are men who care only for themselves, it is possible for the rich to be growing richer while the great body of the people are sunk deeper in ignorance, insufficiently fed, and besotted with beastly drink. Fortunately we have many examples of wise and good employers of labour, who do all that they can to improve the condition of those who work for them; but it is hard to resist the constant tendency in the poor of this country to increase

their numbers at a great rate, and at the same time to become more ignorant, vicious, and miserable. We understand the difficulty and the danger now. It stares us in the face, and if we do not boldly and wisely face the danger we may find that it will cause the ruin of this commonwealth, ruin which will come slowly but surely. We have in this century done much to avert this wretched end, but more remains to be done.

Ought we not, then, to accept Aristotle's doctrine that the legislator ought to occupy himself with education, because, when this is not done, it brings damage to the state? By education we mean not a stuffing of children with words and doctrines, and teaching them very imperfectly to read and write, but the opening of the understanding by good teachers, and the teaching them good habits by proper discipline. The difficulty of the undertaking is enormous, and the success will be slow; but we must begin before it is too late, or we shall soon find it too late to begin.

The religious bodies, as they are called, were those who, somewhat more than a century past, saw the mischief clearly and attempted to cure it by Sunday schools for poor children. We must not blame them if their views were rather narrow. As it is the theory of the English Church that the poor are under the care of the clergy, what could the clergy do more consistently than to teach the poor children religion in Sunday schools,

and take them to church? This Sunday school teaching has done something, though it may be little. We must estimate the good not only by what has been done, but also by the evil which may have been prevented. I once saw a learned divine who had plenty of sense and some humour a little puzzled to explain to his company the advantage of his Sunday schools. He evidently thought the children learned very little, and remained nearly as stupid as when they first came to school; but he gravely remarked that the mothers put on the children's best dresses, washed hands and faces, and combed the hair, and so they made a decent appearance once a week. But now, when towns have so wonderfully increased, and both villages and towns have been invaded by the dissenting preachers, the children have outrun the parson, and he will never overtake them even if he puts on seven-league boots.

Sunday schools were followed by Lancasterian, or, as they are now called, British Schools; and these by National Schools, mainly established by the activity of the clergy of the Church of England. We thus perceive the beginning of a general agreement that we ought to look after the education of the poor and ignorant; and so the conclusion is presented, that if there is this general agreement, the State, as the whole of society, should undertake the business.

If it should be asked, why did not these societies

and bodies leave the education of poor children to their parents, or to benevolent individuals, the answer is ready: the education was for a long time left to anybody or nobody, and there was no education. Societies and religious bodies therefore took it in hand because it was necessary. Why then should not the whole of society, the State, take the thing in hand for the same reason? For besides the general purpose of improving the poor, these societies have their special ends in view, and one chief end is to keep the poor attached to their religious party. These societies do not co-operate directly for one end, and they often act adversely to one another. But if education must be looked after by the State, it must be done in some way by the action of the administrators of the State, yet not in such a way as to interfere unnecessarily with the action of societies, or individuals.

The opinion that religious teaching was the cure for the ignorance and vice of the poor, moved many good men to attempt the reformation of society in this way. But the same opinion is now an obstacle to the undertaking of the business of education by the State. The religious bodies, who have led the way and done so much, do not like the State to meddle with what they are doing, and those who do not belong to the National Church may be afraid that this powerful society may gain some advantage over them if the State

should form a general system of education. The fear is reasonable enough; but the best among the opponents of a general system must see that they cannot do all that they wish, and that the State may help them if it sets about the business in the right way; and the right way is to avoid interfering with any kind of education which is well directed, and to attempt to do more than has yet been done.

Let the matter be considered thus. We have a National Church, rich as a body, though many of the clerical members of this church are as poor as church mice. This is an old comparison, and once I thought that church mice were a fable till I was taught better by a cat of my acquaintance, who used to penetrate audaciously into this holy place, and bring out mice. I could never discover how these mice lived, and I can't tell how the poor clergy live, but their existence is proved by daily experience. We have also rich clergy, and there is no difficulty in knowing how they live. Both kinds of clergy, rich and poor, have now become very active in preaching and teaching. The Church, as we name it, has waked from a long sleep, and is now showing life by stirring about in a wonderful manner, and sometimes playing strange antics.

The National Church did not lead the way to a national system of education, as we now understand those words. A quaker, Joseph Lancaster, showed us the road by opening a school in 1798.

The quaker's principles were broad, like the brim of his hat. The Lancasterian, afterwards and now named British Schools, had for a fundamental rule that the Sacred scriptures or extracts from them should be read daily; but that no catechism or formulary of any religious body should be taught in the hours of instruction, and that children who attended the day school might attend any Sunday school or place of worship. The clergy of the Church of England did not like this religious freedom, and when the National Society began to form the National Schools in 1811 they declared that the National religion of the country should be made the foundation of National education, and accordingly schools were established in which all children were taught according to the Liturgy and Catechism of the Church of England. But by thus limiting their schools to those who were willing to conform to their religious teaching, the National Society actually impeded the establishment of a real national system.*

* [Mr. Bartley, in his useful work "Schools for the People, Bell and Daldy, 1871," says "that the rules of the British Schools were for many years considered objectionable by a large number of well-meaning persons, and the clergy of the Church of England were so strongly opposed to them, that mainly by their influence the National Society was brought into existence to establish schools in which the religious teaching was of a more strictly dogmatic character." The committees of management of the British Schools contained both members

The clerical body of the Church of England is in a manner connected with the State, and specially with the wearer of the imperial crown of this mighty empire, who is the head of this church. I am told, but I can hardly believe it, that there are members of the clerical body who dispute the supremacy of the crown, and would destroy it, if they could. But I warn these gentlemen that this is rebellion, and that if they show their rebellious spirit by open acts, there is a power which can punish them, and ought to punish them. I cannot accurately describe what is now called the connection of Church and State, but you may form a good notion about it in this way. If you are a young man with ability and decent behaviour, and if you were born in a good station—though that is not absolutely necessary—you may enter the church; you may, with the aid of a bishop, become a member of the powerful body of the clergy, and take to reading prayers, looking after schools, preaching, marrying people, burying

of the Church of England and Dissenters of almost every denomination. Mr. Bartley further says, "Public opinion concerning religious teaching of children has of late undergone a change, resulting in the adoption, as the national system of education, of a plan nearly identical in its religious aspect with that on which the British Schools were first started, and which was then so fiercely attacked." See what he says, p. 57, on the opposition of the National Society to what is called the Conscience Clause.—*ED.*]

the dead, and doing other things. If you keep your eyes open, and play your cards well, you may have trumps at last, and you will get some of the good things which the State or others, who are by law empowered, will give you out of the church chest, which contains many dainties. You may have what was once vulgarly called a fat living, a term which implies that there are lean livings; you may become a canon—mind that you learn to spell your new title right—a dean, even a bishop and archbishop, to which high rank and well-paid office many men have risen from low estate. This will shew you what delightful things some few of you out of a very large number may have; and if the business looks very like a lottery, the prize is not the less agreeable to him who gets it.

It is the business of those who direct the State to manage, in a manner, the clergy of the established church, to keep them in good humour, and to secure their affection and esteem, if it is possible. This is accomplished in some degree by securing the highest of the clergy, who assist in securing the rest: the power of preferment is the great means by which a government rules the clergy, though, as I have said, the lucky receivers of preferment are few. So long as an established church exists, it is prudent for a government to satisfy the clergy in all reasonable ways, and to make them as useful as possible in the maintenance of order, good manners, and the education of

the poor, for in all these things they can do a great deal.

This possession of patronage is what has been eloquently termed "the fundamental feature" in the union of Church and State, and if the Church had not this firm foundation to rest upon, it would soon become something different from what it is.

There was a time when we had all one religion, and there was then no difficulty in seeing that all should be taught, and the clergy were the great teachers. We have now many religions, and some of us have no religion. The State protects alike all people, whether religious or not religious, employs them all alike, and promotes them to places and offices. The State then as a State has now no religion. It does not meddle with men's religion, and it has ceased to persecute them for it. The State as such is not Christian. A Jew can sit in the Commons' House, and even in the Lords', when we shall have a lordmaker bold enough to make a lord of such castaways. If I held this power for a time I should certainly try my hand at the work, and I have no doubt that I could make out of a Jew as good a lord as has been made for many years, and a great deal better than some. As far as I understand matters now, a man may be Jew, Turk, infidel or heretic, for whom we pray in one of the Collects of the service for Good Friday; and he stands before the law in

the same condition with any other man. I suppose it is possible that Parsees, who, we know, are clever and have given us money sometimes, and Mahomedans might set up their places of worship in this country, and the Hindoos, Chinese, and Japanese also if the mob would allow them, for unfortunately in some matters the mob are now the supreme authority in the last resort. I should like to see a few Parsees in the Commons' House. I once read a long correspondence all in English between Parsee merchants of Bombay and English merchants, and I found the Parsee letters written in a better hand and much better expressed than the English letters. If the Parsees got some Europeans to write for them, and I believe that they did not, they took good care to make their clerks write excellent sense.

The State then, as such, is neither Christian nor opposed to Christianity in any form; and it can only assist in the education of the poor by interfering in no way with religious teaching, and in doing or aiding to do all other teaching in the best way that it can.

This is the only principle on which we can now educate the poor of this realm. We must not teach them religion in the way that the Church wishes, or any body wishes, without the consent of those who have the care of the children; and if the poor choose to have their children brought

up without religion, it must be so; but I believe that experience shows that most poor persons make no difficulty about religious teaching for their children, and are content to take it with the rest. If parents ever do object to the religious teaching, their children will still learn something in the schools under a good discipline, and they will be better children than if they learned nothing; and I believe, though it may seem to some persons a singular opinion, that they will have a better chance of turning out useful members of society than if they were brought up in any school where there was only religious teaching; for this teaching becomes so tiresome, is so narrow, and so ill adapted to the ordinary wants of life that I wonder how any rational man can expect much from it. Will men never learn that unless a child's understanding is in some way opened to the comprehension of the things amidst which he must live and labour, there is no safety for him? No safety at all in being filled with religious dogmas, which he often entirely misunderstands, but there is great danger. We see this in the case of those unfortunate persons, who are strangled according to law for their misdeeds, and we read of the edifying labours of the chaplain who prepares them for the last appearance in public. The poor wretch not only dies a good Christian, but more than that: he has secured a place in heaven, and can even pardon

those who have persecuted him. He was only a murderer and he is now a saint.*

Some may fear that the religious education of the poor will be neglected, if the State shall undertake all education except that part. It seems to me probable that the religious education will be improved. We must then proclaim, or somebody with power must proclaim, that the business of educating the poor must be begun ; that all existing schools of every description, which are useful, must be retained ; that new schools be made where they are wanted, and that we must pay for them, at least in part, as we do for catching rogues and punishing them. These schools must be superintended by persons who live about them, they must be visited by agents of the State, and reports made of their condition at regular times ; but above all we must try to mend the teachers, for it is their oral instruction and their example which will do

* [There has been recently a signal instance of canonization in England, which is recorded in an excellent article in the *Saturday Review*, April 20, 1872, entitled the "Martyred Horry." This poor man was strangled because he killed his wife. The strangling was certainly irregular, for murderers have of late often been excused from this disagreeable penalty. But Horry had his reward. A funeral sermon was "kindly preached" for him by the rector of Burslem, in Staffordshire. His funeral card described Horry as "a man, a Christian, and a martyr." Unfortunately, this Christian martyr was given to hard drinking, and finally murdered his wife. So we learn what a man may do and still be a Christian martyr.—Ed.]

the chief part of the work. We must pay these teachers well when they are worth their hire, and get rid of bad teachers in a summary way. It is a great undertaking. Many blunders may be made at first, but let us begin, grow wiser by experience, and stop the decay of the empire if we can. Fortune, it is said, favours the brave; and Fortune favours the wise and good.

A state may be ruined from above or from below, or at both ends at once. The Roman republic fell both through the vices and ignorance of the nobles and the rich, and of the ignoble and the poor. Our state suffers also from the vices and follies of the rich, but the amount of mischief thus caused is not enough to ruin a nation. We are also secure against attempts of daring men to seize supreme power, but we suffer from the contests of parties, which the cunning turn to their own profit. We must take the good and bad of political strife together, and be content, if we are better off with it than we should be without it.

There are ignorant rich, and a great many of them. I call those rich who are not compelled to work for their living. There are rich who are not ignorant, and some of them are very wise; so wise that they work in many ways without being under any compulsion. I am now speaking of the ignorant rich, who, instead of doing any good by spending their money, often do a great deal of harm, and corrupt others. If we begin to con-

sider how we can mend these people, we shall soon discover that we are undertaking a matter which it is hard to manage. We can do very little for them directly. It is a prudent thing to look carefully after the large amount of property which has been appropriated in this country to education, to secure the proper administration of the funds, and, if it is necessary, to turn them to better purposes. There is enough employment here for some time. We do not think yet, and I hope we never shall think of giving public money for the education of those who can pay for it. It may have been done sometimes for what I know, but, if it has been done, we should hold our hands. All who can pay for good education should pay or go without it, which will be no great punishment to some of them. If the rich choose to let their children remain ignorant and stupid, we cannot help it; the children will suffer for it in the nature of things, but it is unfortunately a part of the nature of things that they make others suffer too. In modern societies it seems quite impossible for the State to reach directly the education of any class of people who can afford to pay for it.

A device has been hit on for doing something in another way. The State has many servants, and some people are much pleased to put their children into this service. The State, like any other master, can make terms with the candidates for state service: it can require of them proof of

their fitness for a place ; but, by the oddest freak of wildness, it has been supposed that the best servants for the State would be discovered by examining candidates in all kinds of things, in proposing questions of great difficulty about matters which are in no way connected with the place which the candidate seeks. The result is, that the State is presented with batches of candidates crammed to bursting, and if any of them turn out to be good servants, it is not because of the stuffing—the material was too good to be spoiled.

It may be said in favour of this system of appointing State servants, that the successful candidates have proved that they can work, and have learned something ; that the public are pleased to know that admission into the great workshop of Government is open, not to all, but to those who can pay the expense of having their children prepared for these examinations ; and that it relieves those who would otherwise appoint the servants from much trouble, and the importunity of beggars. It is only for the first places, I suppose, that these examinations are used—and not for subsequent promotion. When public servants have been tried, their promotion must be made in another way, which may not be perfect, but the best yet discovered.

We know that all public places require only men of moderate acquirements, good sense, and decent behaviour. It is prudent for the State not

to take a servant without proof of some capacity, and of the acquirements which his place will require. Certain places may require some peculiar knowledge, such as modern languages. But what is the use of asking for more than is wanted? Whatever a youth's acquirements may be, you cannot tell whether he will be a good servant or not till you have tried him. It would be quite as consistent, and quite as foolish, to choose our judges by examinations in all manner of things, as our public clerks and servants by universal examinations. I don't know the best way of choosing such servants; but where there is a choice there must be a chooser, and if he choose only from persons proved to be competent as far as that can be ascertained, he has done all that any sensible man would expect. No system of examinations, no acuteness on the part of those who appoint to offices, can secure the best men. It is enough to secure competent men; and time and opportunity will discover among these competent men those who are fit for promotion, and able to do the best work.

I do not see that the State can do any thing with private schools. They are commercial speculations, and sometimes good speculations. These schools have been greatly improved since I have known them, and the competition of private schools has improved endowed schools by showing that the private schools could supply a kind

of education which endowed schools did not. There was a time when many private schools of the lower kind were kept by very ignorant men—even gentlemen's retired butlers. Those were the days when men about London, who had failed in business, deliberated whether they should put on their door a brass plate indicating that they dealt in coals or set up a board with "Academy" painted on it. I have talked with such gentlemen, and I have pitied both them and their scholars. Probably the breed is now almost an extinct species. They have ceased to live, because there was no room for them; or, if they still exist, they are only few. Better schools have taken the place of cheap ill-managed boarding-schools kept by ignorant men; and we may hope that the good will in the end conquer the bad. A large school at Hurstpierpoint, in Sussex, has now for many years given a good and cheap education to those who cannot afford to pay much for it; and as the number of boys is large, the managers can give their education cheaper than a competent man could give an equal education who had only a few pupils. This school is under a religious discipline, which some people dislike; but the boys' parents have no objection to it. If the managers can turn out young men whose understanding has been improved, and who have been trained to order, industry, and obedience, we ask for no more. It is not likely that the young men will fail to do their work in

life; and if they ever do, it is their own fault only, and nobody can help it.

There is no end of this business, when you begin to think or write about it; but if you do not put an end to your writing, people will put an end to their reading. It is now a great question how far the State should go in superintending schools generally. As in other things, all wise men see that there is a limit to State supervision. The State can only supervise and aid by agents—by men who may be no wiser than other men, and may misuse and abuse their office. We must maintain the principle of freedom for those who teach and are not paid by the State; and if this freedom can be reconciled with any useful supervision, all will be well. But I do not yet see what this supervision should be. It might be considered whether the State should require any evidence of fitness in all those who undertake teaching, as it does in the case of medicine-men and solicitors, but does not in the case of those who teach religion, unless they belong to the National Church. But even this demand upon teachers to prove their fitness may not be necessary now. Things have changed, and teachers are improving, and must improve.

I leave to time to settle this matter of education, and to younger men the discussion of it. We have many who are able to say something useful, and I hope that they will say it. I have said all

that I can. If old age brings experience, it brings also want of perception, and diminishes the power of labour; and if it should spare the head, while it creeps on us, as the Roman poet says, "silent and unobserved," it lays a weight on the body, which it is sometimes hard to bear.*

* [This chapter has scarce any resemblance to the severe and rigid essay to which the author alludes; but many of the arguments are the same. The work of the young man is so dry, so far removed from the common form of argumentation, that there is no wonder that few read it. The reader will see what the later piece of work is. That for which the writer contended has now been partially done or attempted, as everybody knows, and we wait to see the result.—Ed.]





OF TAXATION.

I.

THIS is part of my subject. We are all children of taxation. Having paid taxes so long, I know something about paying them, but I know nothing about receiving taxes, for I have never received any; nor am I well informed about the way in which my taxes have been spent, though I can make a guess.

When I see or hear of a new child coming into the world, I say, a new tax-payer is born unto us. He may also be a tax-collector, and a tax-eater; but he is always a tax-payer, directly or indirectly, as we say.

In modern times, and in countries named civilized, taxation is the great business of those who govern, and the great torment of those who are governed. The clumsy way of governing by force only, by simple robbery and other violent ways, is going out of fashion, and an ingenious contrivance

is used for reaching the same end by means more circuitous, but not less sure.

If some tax-payers were asked for a definition of taxation, I would lay a wager that they would blunder in the definition, and yet they know what the thing is, as a dog who has been well threshed fully understands what it is, though he might give an imperfect definition of a threshing. I shall, therefore, as my fashion is, abstain from a definition, and come right to the thing itself, being quite certain that it is sufficiently known and felt by all who receive the tax-collector's visits, or his ugly printed circulars.

The complete history of taxation in the old world will be written by some retired Chancellor of the Exchequer, who may pile up mountains of facts, and write folios, but he will not make the nature of the thing plainer than I shall do in a few pages. When this history shall be written and written truly, it will be the most pitiable tale that ever was told. War, pestilence and famine have desolated the world; but taxation has done as much mischief as all three together, and has often prepared the way for them. Our own taxation has been bad enough, but we know nothing of the misery which taxation can cause until we compare our sufferings with those of other nations. France, before the great Revolution, can give us a lesson which will make us more content with our own condition past and

present; and the history of taxation in some other countries, if we knew it, would make us still more content.

Ingenious men have written on liberty, and have tried to show what is true liberty, and how it is to be got and kept. I am not going to attempt this matter at present; but I shall observe that the liberty of all cannot be secured without some restraint upon all, for if every man is allowed to do just what he likes, the end will be that none of us will have any liberty. Even kings and governors of all descriptions must be put under some restraint, or they will abuse their power. You may ask how the man who possesses unlimited political power shall be restrained, and it is not easy to answer the question. If such a man still exists, and I suppose that he does, I know no way of putting him under restraint except by getting rid of him. When the political power is distributed as it is in our country, how must it be kept in order? The Crown, the Lords and Commons, can theoretically make any law, and it is a law, a command, whether it is a good or a bad law, and it can be, and is enforced. But with us there is a thing called opinion, a power vague and indefinite, but useful and necessary. It is exercised by liberty of speech, which cannot be taken from us; by liberty of meeting and discussion, which cannot be entirely repressed; but most of all by liberty of printing, which cannot be

destroyed, though it may be put under some restraint when it is exercised in a manner injurious to the general interest. But printing among us cannot be restrained directly by those who hold the political power: it can only be checked, and it must sometimes be checked by the aid of the people themselves under the name of jury. Now of all restraints put upon people there is none that can abridge true liberty more than taxation. When a man's money is taken from him, his liberty to improve his condition is so far impaired, unless the money which he pays is moderate in amount, unless the demand is fairly imposed on all, and unless he obtains for his taxes a liberty and a security which he could not obtain, if he did not pay his taxes. Taxation which is excessive, unequally distributed, and a hindrance to industry, is the greatest enemy of man's rational liberty. it is the instrument by which tyrants have supplied the means for their extravagance, and unwise governments have impoverished the people.

The true way to write the history of any thing, it is generally supposed, is by beginning with the beginning; and most writers, who write complete histories begin in this way. It matters not to them whether there is a beginning or not—they will find one. Those who maintain the theory of the social contract must admit that the parties to the contract made terms about taxation, for they came to some agreement about government, and

what is government without taxation? My view of the thing is simpler. I wait for the original contract to be produced before I admit that it ever existed, and most people in this philosophical age will do the same. I can see no beginning of taxation except in force, for no man ever yet voluntarily parted with any thing, except he received for it directly what he thought to be an equivalent; and force is still the ultimate reason which is employed to wring taxes out of a reluctant payer.

In the savage state, as it is called, robbery stands in the place of taxation. There are still people in South America, if travellers tell the truth, and perhaps in other parts also, who form no communities. They exist only in families, like the Cyclopes of the *Odyssey*, and if one family wants something which it has not, and another family has it, robbery or stealing is as simple, as natural, we may say, as for a thief or pickpocket among us to take something from his neighbour. There may be taxation of some kind among Nomadic tribes, who move about with their beasts from one feeding place to another, and do not cultivate the ground; but this taxation must be a very imperfect thing. When man first began, if ever he first began, to have the use of a piece of ground for himself, then taxation found a sure footing. If the man worked hard, and produced something, you may be sure that he was some-

times visited by men stronger than himself, who required a part of his earnings to be surrendered, and these were the only terms on which he would be allowed to keep the rest. These primitive tax-collectors would have wit enough to see that if they took all, the man could not, and would not, if he could, produce any more. So the problem which these tax-collectors had to work out was this: how much can we take without disabling the man so that he can produce no more. This was a problem of great nicety, but it was solved in a very rough way, for the collectors took enough to prevent the man from increasing his powers of production, without taking enough to stop him entirely. And so the world has gone on to the present day, the labourer working hard to produce, and the tax-collector, in some countries, leaving him just enough to live on, but not enough to enable him to grow rich, and pay more ultimately. An Englishman who wrote in 1837, a careful observer, who was well acquainted with Egypt and the hard condition of the peasantry under Egyptian taxation, says that "it would be scarcely possible for them to suffer more and live." In the Regency of Tunis, where there is some good land, the cultivator only lives, he never thinks of producing in order to grow richer. The slightest appearances of comfort and improvement are stopped by the taxes on agriculture, and the exactions of the tax-collector.

The man, who took a part of the produce of another man's labour, would for his own interest protect his tax-payer in some degree against irregular demands by others, whom he would call thieves, robbers and foreigners; but his protection was very insufficient, for he often lived a long way off, and, if he got what he wanted, he would not take much trouble to prevent his tax-payer from being occasionally robbed. So the man paid his taxes regularly, and his children went on doing the same. The thing became as familiar, and seemed as natural as plague, and storms, and floods, and anything else that afflicts the human race. Men ceased to think of receiving protection, or anything valuable, in return for the taxes which they paid. The tax-collector was a locust; but he came every year, and a locust does not do that. They expected the tax-collector, and they satisfied him, or he helped himself and went away; and the tax-payer hoped that he might never see him again, though he knew that if he did not see the same, he would see another, and perhaps a worse locust.

We read of sea-robbers in the Mediterranean in very remote times. Sea-robbery or irregular maritime taxation was then an honourable profession, as we learn from the *Odyssey* and *Thucydides*. If men were robbed on the sea, there was trade on the sea, and the trade must have been active before it would be profitable to begin the

business of piracy. An ancient king of Crete, named Minos, has the credit of putting down these robbers for the time ; but the breed always existed, and the Romans many ages after Minos were obliged to use all their force to suppress this robbery. Even in our times the thing has been known in the Mediterranean, and it still exists in other seas.

I have not discovered who invented the very simple practice of taxing things which were brought into ports by men in ships. But it is so easy a way of raising money that it must be almost as old as trade by sea. Whenever it began, it has never been discontinued, and we are familiar with it now. In Caesar's time, the Veneti, who occupied part of Bretagne in France, and possessed the ports on the coast of their territory, levied contributions on those who sailed in their waters, which could only be done either by robbing, which they are not accused of practising, or by making seamen pay when they entered the Venetian ports. We read also that the Alpine peoples, or their chiefs, levied tolls on the traders who crossed the mountains from Italy, and their demands were not light. The Gaul has always had a talent for taxation; the ruling Gaul, I mean ; and the Gaul, who is ruled, has had a habit of paying taxes from time beyond memory to the present day. A witty French writer has said that "the people are made for the purpose of paying," which history

proves ; and a few are made for the purpose of receiving and eating taxes. There were tolls on the rivers in Gallia before the Romans entered the country, and the Romans were so wise that when they found a good practice established, they did not disturb it. These river tolls, under the name of *Traites*, when collected on behalf of the State, and *Péages* when collected on behalf of communities or *Seigneurs*, existed till the great French Revolution of 1789, and at that time, during a long course of ages, they had reached perfection. On the Loire from St. Rambert in the Forez to Nantes, at the mouth of the Loire, there were twenty-eight *Péages*, and the rich Abbey of Fontevrault imposed one every year for fifteen days in January and fifteen in May.* In India the trick was known and practised. The Ameers of Scinde levied tolls on the boats which sailed on the Indus and robbed the poor merchant, till one day, not long ago, a greater robber came, who robbed the Ameers, and even seized their country and annexed it, as the phrase is, to a large territory which the robbers had gotten in the same way.

This is a fair account of the origin of the plague named taxation. It attacked those who had a fixed abode, and laboured on the ground ; and it attacked those who carried their goods by land or

* Louis Blanc's "*Histoire de la Révolution Française*," i. 513.

by water for the purpose of selling them. In ancient times other ways of taking men's money were discovered from time to time by ingenious governors; but all the ancient methods of extracting a man's money from him have been far surpassed by the wisdom of modern rulers. By these money-raising contrivances, named taxes, governments have been supported, and armies equipped and fed, and a few who have been so lucky as to get a good share of these taxes, have lived in luxury, and many have worked hard to pay them.

In ancient times, besides the regular plague of taxation, which never stopped, there were the irregular plagues of war, which were accompanied by demands on the people in whose country war was carried on, by plunder without the form of asking for anything, and by the sale of conquered people into slavery. We have all these things still, except the sale of prisoners.

The Romans, our masters and teachers in many things, were great slave dealers. Their merchants used to follow the armies and buy prisoners. The purchase-money originally belonged to the State, but in the later Republic the generals often laid hold of it, and now and then gave the soldiers a little to keep them quiet. When the treasury received it, the money helped the Romans to carry on war and get more money; and it also enabled them to tax their own people less. The Roman principle of war was sound. When a people were

beaten, the Romans made them pay for the cost of the beating. As the cost of war must be paid in some way, nothing is fitter than that those should pay who have given the enemy the trouble and expense of beating them. This is true in all cases. If the conqueror began the quarrel, the conquered must pay for not submitting soon enough. If the conquered were the aggressors, they must pay for all reasons, but chief of all, because they cannot avoid it.

Caesar, in his Gallic wars, one day sold fifty-three thousand head of people—men, women, and children. He does not say what the produce of the sale was, but it would be a large sum, if the average price was only a few pounds a head. Caesar was a wise man ; he had always money in his pocket during his wars. He did not send this sale money to Rome ; it might have been lost on the road. So we assume that he kept it for the expenses of the war, but still he received supplies from home, in which he also showed his wisdom ; for how could he tell how much he would want before he had finished this great job ? After the capture of Alesia, Caesar had so many prisoners that he gave one to every soldier. This was like our prize-money. The soldier could easily sell his man to the merchants for money or drink, or anything that they had to offer. I should like to know how many prisoners the Roman general kept for himself ; but he is always very reserved

about such things; and indeed, he might have said, if he had been asked—if you can imagine any man venturing to ask—he might have said something, and I leave the reader to guess what, for I cannot conceive. If you wish to see the place where Caesar finally humbled the Gaul, you may easily find it. But take care that you do not apply for directions to the wrong Frenchman, for he will send you to the wrong place, and you will not find out your mistake until your eyes have convinced you of it.

The English, who resemble the Romans in some things, differ from them entirely in one matter. The Romans conquered and annexed countries, and made the conquered people pay taxes in ease of the Roman citizens. The English have conquered countries, and made us at home pay the expense of conquering, keeping, and protecting. This absurd practice led Adam Smith to say that “if any of the provinces of the British empire cannot be made to contribute towards the support of the whole empire, it is surely time that Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending those provinces in time of war, and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace, and endeavour to accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances.” Some big countries in the East have been kept at the cost of the natives, who are taxed; but these taxes are

used only for the benefit of those who keep the country in subjection, and not in ease of the conquering nation. Perhaps the reason may be that there is nothing left after all expenses of governing have been paid. There was a time, it is said, early in the history of the East India Company, when they were traders and governors at the same time, and were compelled to call for the aid of the British Government to keep them from bankruptcy.* I should like to know if ever they repaid the English taxpayers.

At one time the English people were very busy with catching black men in Africa, or inviting them to catch one another; and when the men were caught and delivered to us for some small sum, we did not sell them for the benefit of the English nation, but we allowed private persons to take all the profit. The notion of our ancestors was that they ought to protect and encourage their people in this trade, which supplied labourers to the English planters in the new world. The traders took the black people across the Atlantic in crowded ships, where they suffered misery past telling, and many died; but they were black folks, not white; and they were poor heathens, and those who carried them over were Christians; which makes, as we know, a mighty difference. These labourers made the planters rich; and the sale of the labourers made

* Adam Smith, iv. p. 205., Knight's edition.

the dealers rich; and all the white people, buyers and sellers, grew rich; and when these happy fellows came to England, they spent freely, and paid taxes as honest men ought to do. This custom of buying and selling black men is still carried on; but as we have long since retired from the business, we have very properly tried to stop the trade altogether, of which I certainly do not complain; but I am inclined to think that it would have been better never to have begun it. This business of dealing in black men has been atoned for in some measure by our generation. We paid £20,000,000 to the owners of black slaves in our American colonies to secure the liberation of the living men and women, if there were any then living, whom we had stolen, and of their descendants. This was something like the Conscience Money, the payment of which we see advertised in the newspapers. The sins of the fathers were visited on the children; we paid the penalty of our father's crimes.

Some twenty years before the settlement of James Town, on the James river in Virginia, some English adventurers to America had introduced into England the practice of smoking tobacco, and as a demand for tobacco was established in the old country, the settlers began to cultivate this native plant. Virginia did not produce gold or silver, but the virgin soil produced tobacco, which was as good as the precious metals, for it would keep a long time, and it was the

same as money when it was sent to England. The Virginians paid the members of their Assembly in tobacco, and clerks of courts and others, and even their parsons. As the demand for tobacco increased, more labourers were wanted. The Dutch came in 1620 from the Guinea coast to the James River, and sold twenty slaves to the settlers. In time the importation of slaves had raised the number so much, that the Virginia legislature thought it prudent to check the importation by making the purchaser of an imported slave pay a tax of five and afterwards ten per cent. on the value of the black man; and this tax of ten per cent. was never reduced. Yet the importation of slaves continued, because their labour was profitable. When the American revolution had begun, Lord Dunmore, the last Governor of Virginia, fixed his headquarters at Norfolk, and by a promise of freedom invited the black men to join him and take up arms against their masters who furnished England with tobacco. Finally the Governor set fire to Norfolk, and ran away in his ships. Thus ended the English Government in Virginia. The Governor ran off, but the black man stayed and went on making more tobacco to chew and to smoke, which has been the cause of much sorrow to Virginia, and has at last produced smoke of another kind, smoke mingled with fire.*

[* This was written during the late war between the North-

A history of Roman taxation would be instructive. It would cost some labour, but it might be done in a small compass. The earliest source of the income of the Roman State, and the chief source, was the *Tributum*, or a tax levied on the estimated capital value of all property, and as land was the chief property, the *Tributum* was a kind of land tax. The Romans had, at an early time in their history, a census, which was a numbering of the people and an estimation of the value of property. After the conquest of Macedonia in B.C. 167, Aemilius Paulus brought an enormous sum of money into the Roman Treasury, and the *Tributum* was then remitted, and never permanently collected again until the time of the later Empire. The English people have never had such good luck. The Roman citizen from the year 167 was free from this land-tax, and the burden of taxes was transferred to the provinces, which were

ern and the Confederate States. Mr. Jefferson foresaw the danger from slavery; but his plan for getting rid of slavery was not practicable. But slavery was not the only cause of the war, though it aggravated the war. President Lincoln would have maintained slavery, if he could by doing so have maintained the Union, and he would have been supported by a large majority. At last he ignobly used the black man as a means of conquering his white master, as Lord Dunmore tried to do. He accomplished his purpose, but not without increasing the difficulty of forcing a union of discordant elements, which cannot always be kept in combination. No man knew this better than he to whose chapter this note is added.—Ed.]

heavily taxed. The chief provincial tax fell on the produce of the ground, and it was sometimes paid in kind, which the Romans called Tenths. Tenths were paid of the produce of wheat and barley; and tenths also of *fruges minutae*, pulse and the like, and oil and wine.

Duties on goods imported and exported, and tolls on goods which passed certain ferries and other places were early established in Italy. The Romans knew well what a custom-house officer was and a toll collector, and they did not like them. These customs and tolls were abolished in Italy in Cicero's time, as we see from one of his letters; but they were still collected in the provinces. Suetonius states that Caesar, when he attained the supreme power, re-established the customs' duties on imported foreign merchandise. These duties, named Portoria, gave great trouble. The collectors rummaged goods and baggage, turned all upside down, and behaved as roughly as we have seen these fellows behave in our time. I am glad to say that I have lived long enough to see them mend their manners. Man is not a fickle, changeable animal, as some have said. Under the same circumstances he is always the same. Sometimes the collectors of customs even opened letters, as our modern Secretaries of State have done.

The Romans did not collect their taxes by tax collectors, and thus they escaped the risk of the collectors running off with the money or spending

it. The Roman capitalists formed joint stock companies, who farmed the taxes, which means that they agreed to pay to the Roman treasury (*aerarium*) a certain sum for the right to collect the taxes; and what remained after paying the expenses of the collection was the profit of the shareholders. The companies or their agents often extorted more than their due, and we know from Cicero that abuses of all kinds prevailed in the provinces in the collection of these taxes, and made the people wretched and poor. One of the writers in the New Testament has very properly classed these tax collectors, under the name of Publicans (*Publicani*), with sinners.

The Romans had also Public Land, or land which belonged to the State. It was got by the successive conquests of Rome in the Italian peninsula and elsewhere, and by stripping the conquered people of their land or of part of it. Some of this land was sold; some was let at a rent; and from time to time land was given to settlers in small allotments. But there was more land in Italy than could be sold or given to settlers at once, and it was occupied by capitalists, we hardly know how, for the whole business was carelessly managed, on condition of paying as rent to the State a certain part of the produce. These occupiers also paid a fixed rate for animals which fed on the public pastures, generally the hills and forests, which were not fit for the plough or for vineyards and

olive plantations. The Public Land was the cause of internal dissension at Rome from the time when it began to exist to the end of the Republic, and the history of these quarrels is very instructive, but not easy to understand.

It has, however, been made more difficult than it really is by the ingenuity and ignorance of some learned men, who have thought that they knew more about it than the ancient writers tell us. These ancient writers are often obscure and confused, but if we do not accept the facts which they state, how can we know anything about the matter? Everybody has heard, except the great majority of men, of Agrarian laws at Rome, which convulsed the Republic for centuries. He who would know all about them must take a good deal of labour and add to it a little common sense, in which commodity the learned, who have treated of this matter, are sometimes deficient. The object of these Agrarian laws was to give lands in small quantities to Roman settlers, and to regulate the enjoyment of such lands as were retained by the State. But, as I have said, the whole business was badly managed: the rich got into their hands much of the Public Land, and either paid less than they ought to have done, or sometimes nothing at all; and this led to the disturbances caused by the two reforming brothers Gracchi, both of whom lost their lives.

The Roman system of distributing public land

was a small allotment system, which would answer better in Italy than in our country ; and attempts were made to prevent the sale of these allotments, but still they were often bought up by the rich. The purpose of the Gracchi was to make many small cultivators, and so to check the growth of slaves, who were employed on the large possessions of the rich. The small cultivator was also well adapted for the breeding of soldiers for the wars. But this land system of the Romans produced knavery and jobbing of all kinds.

One of the great jobs done by C. Caesar in his first consulship (B.C. 59), was the distribution of some of the fertile land of Campania among soldiers and poor citizens, who had three or more children. The land was already occupied by industrious men, who made some payment to the state for the land, but they were turned out, and we do not know what became of them. A German writer will tell you that they were indemnified either with lands or money. But don't believe him. He does not prove what he says, and he cannot prove it.

The Publicani, or Roman farmers of taxes, were represented in ante-revolutionary France by the *fermiers généraux*, who farmed five of the principal branches of the Crown revenue, and two of these branches were salt and tobacco, both of them monopolies. Adam Smith, who visited France in 1764-5, has declared "that the most sanguinary

revenue laws are always to be found in countries where the greater part of the public revenue is in farm." The farmers general of France squeezed the life blood out of the people, and then insulted them by an insolent display of the wealth which they drew from the sufferings of their countrymen. The customs' duties and the octroi are still farmed in the Regency of Tunis, but only the duties on things imported, and not those on things exported. The abuses under this system are scandalous and almost incredible. A comparison between these modern farmers and the Roman Publicani would make good employment for some industrious Briton.

Under the Empire more money was spent, and it was got by more taxation. If you turn a republic into an empire you may expect more taxation; and if you turn an old kingdom into a new republic you may also expect more taxation. The process of conversion is always expensive. Under Augustus, after the civil wars, taxes were levied on articles of consumption, one per cent., whether the things were sold in the market or by auction. This tax was like a French octroi, such as is paid at the gates of Paris on meat, wine, and other articles brought into the city for use. We have the thing in one of our southern English towns—a tax on coals which are brought in by land.*

* [The tax formerly levied in England on coal carried coast-ways was abolished in 1831.—ED.]

Tiberius, the successor of Augustus, was intreated to remit this tax, for the people of Rome discovered that it made living dearer ; but this cunning ruler said that he could not do without it : he required the money for his army. When he annexed the kingdom of Cappadocia to the empire, he reduced this tax to one half per cent. and made up the deficiency at the expense of the Cappadocians. The English have done a good deal of annexation even in recent times, but we at home have never had any advantage from it. Suppose that when an annexation had been made, the next thing was the abolition of some abominable tax, which fettered our industry, and sometimes actually destroyed some branch of it, how much we should have been delighted, and how eager we should have been that the annexation business should go on rapidly. It seems that annexation in India, if it brings profit, brings also cost, and that the managers of India require all the money that they can scrape together. There is nothing left for us. All that we can do is to tax the English gentlemen when they come home from India to enjoy what they have earned and saved. It is very probable that many of them return for the patriotic purpose of paying taxes on their Indian gains.

The taxation under the Roman empire became heavier. Salt is a necessary article, and it was early discovered that taxes might be got out of it. There is an old story that when the Roman king

Aneus Marcius got possession of Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber, salt pans were constructed, as we suppose, for supplying Rome. I can't find out whether there was then a tax on salt, but there was certainly a tax on salt in the Second Punic war, and it existed under the Empire both in Italy and in the provinces. The Greek kings of Syria had a tax on salt, and of course the Romans kept it when they annexed Syria. When Demetrius wished to make the Jews his allies, he went about the matter in a very prudent way: he proposed to release them from many taxes, and one of the taxes was the duties on salt. We have had this scandalous tax in our country. Will posterity ever believe that in 1805, when we were very busy with wars, the tax on salt was fifteen shillings a bushel? It is now nothing. About thirty years ago the cost of producing the best Cheshire salt was not more than fourpence a bushel, and the cost in 1805 was perhaps not much more. When the English entered India, they found that salt was a monopoly of the native governments, and, after Roman fashion, they maintained the tax, and the Indian Government is now the only salt maker in India. This government also raises a tax on salt imported into India, and it gets a wonderful revenue out of the poor people who work in cotton shirts, and live on a little rice. The anticipated revenue on salt in 1861-2 was £5,235,000. All bad governments have taxed salt. It is a necessary of life, as much

as air, which they would tax also, if they could. This salt tax ought to be called a tax on living. But in the matter of salt we have not been so wicked as the French before the Revolution. In some of the provinces, for France was then full of irregularities, the consumption of salt was estimated at seven pounds a head per annum, and families were compelled under fine to buy this quantity, whether they wanted it or not. Smugglers of salt were punished by fines, the galleys, stripes, and death. Women, married and single, were fined, whipped, and banished the kingdom; and the husbands of the married women were responsible both in fine and body. Would a man believe it possible, if it were not proved, that salt, which is so great a blessing, could ever bring such misery on mankind? (*Arthur Young's Travels in France*, chapter of the *Revolution of France*).

The Roman emperors levied a tax on the sale of slaves. Nero tried to make the people believe that he had remitted the tax, because he made the seller pay it, but Tacitus found out that the buyer ultimately paid it, because the seller added the amount of the tax to the price of the slave. There was also a tax of five per cent. on the manumission of slaves, established B.C. 357, but the man who was made free paid the tax under the Empire at least, whatever the tax then was. There was a tax of five per cent. on successions; that is, on property which came to a man by will or as next of kin, where there was no will, or by donations

"mortis causa," as the lawyers say; and on legacies. But these taxes were not levied on property which thus came to persons whose kinship was very near to the deceased, nor on the property of those who died poor. This tax on successions was the invention of that prudent prince, Augustus. The Romans did not like the tax, but he reconciled them to it by letting them know that if they grumbled and would not bear this tax, they would have a heavier burden laid on their backs.

I have not discovered that the Romans ever laid a tax on windows; and it may be supposed that it was because they had no windows. But they had holes in walls to let light in, which is the correct definition of a Roman window; and they also covered these holes with something, at least during the night; as we may see even now in some countries a piece of wood used for that purpose. The Romans also did sometimes put glass of a coarse kind in their windows, which would have made them subject to a window tax, if their windows had been in England during the window tax period. We have been a wonderful taxing people. When we had a tax on glass, which has not been abolished very long, our wise men took it into their heads to tax the glass again when it was used to put in the hole, which the Romans called a window. Then the taxpayer, who is always as ingenious as the tax-maker,

stopped some of his windows up. Those who are as old as I am will remember windows filled with brick and mortar on the inside, and the tax spy looking sharp to see if he could discover a loose brick, which might be drawn out, when the man in the house wished to let a little light into his den. It was a very amusing game, which sometimes ended in the poor man paying for his bricked window.

I have read of a tax on doors in some of the Roman provinces, whether outside doors only, or inside doors also, I don't know. If it was on inside as well as outside doors, I think that the people would have taken off the inside doors; but perhaps the collector would have maintained that a hole by which you enter a room was a door virtually, as we say. This door tax was evidently a rudimentary house tax. We once had a tax on hearths, two shillings a piece, and the taxman entered the house to count the hearths. His visit was not liked, and the tax was abolished.

In the civil war between Caesar and Pompeius, Scipio, who was Governor of Syria, marched his troops into the province of Asia, which was a rich country, and there he set about taxing with as much vigour as William Pitt in the great French war; for Scipio wanted money for the war with Caesar as much as William did for the war with Bonaparte. Scipio laid a poll tax on every head, free and slave. If a man had columns about

his house, he taxed them; and he laid a tax on doors: any name, says Caesar, was enough as a pretext for taxing. There is much sense in Caesar's remark. We lay a tax now on many things, carriages for instance, and horses, and mules, and dogs; but not yet on donkeys, cats, or birds in cages. There is no reason in the nature of things why a man's carriage should be taxed; but the reason is this, he who rides in a carriage has money, and more than many people, and the tax maker wishes to get at the money, and so the name of carriage is used. This carriage tax, and many similar taxes, are the only means by which a State can tax the rich enough. You may think of many other ways of taxing the rich, and you will find all of them impracticable. So the State lays the tax on a man's expense in some matter, which he can avoid if he chooses not to indulge in the expense. Those only pay the carriage tax directly who can afford to buy and keep carriages and horses. But what shall we say of taxes on those who ride, and must ride, in railway carriages, save those who from choice or necessity take the third-class? I believe that many people do not know that when they take a railroad ticket, and pay to the company which carries them a reasonable sum for being moved, they also pay a tax to the tax-collector. He does not wait at the carriage door to take the tax as you step in, but he gets it in another way, which is easier for him.

Taxes on moving about a country in vehicles seem strange. They are very like the old Gallic tolls of which I have spoken. There is no tax yet on walking about the country, nor on flying in balloons, though a balloon tax would be very reasonable, but not profitable to collect.

We pay no taxes on female servants, and we pay taxes on male servants ; but the male is not ripe for perfect taxation until he has reached the age of eighteen, an age which is ascertained, as we all know, by a bare inspection of the boy. I have not found out all the reasons for our paying a tax on male servants only, but I believe that one reason is the fact announced in the old Eton Latin Grammar, that the masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine. In Holland where both male and female servants were, and perhaps still are taxed, the worthiness of the two genders is equal.

I do not reckon the payment for water in some of our towns as a tax, which some writers do. This is a purchase as it was with the Romans, and they considered it as a purchase. A citizen of Rome and the neighbourhood had his water from the aqueducts, both for domestic use and for irrigation of the land, and he had his value for what he paid. There is still extant a work on the Roman aqueducts by Frontinus, who was inspector of aqueducts in the reign of Nerva. A man in a country town paid for his water, if he

had it from an aqueduct, and many towns had these aqueducts. The French towns under the Roman Empire were well supplied with water, much better than they are now. The remains of these aqueducts are numerous in France. The aqueduct, which crosses the river Gardon not far from Nîmes, was one of the most magnificent and most useful of Roman works. We look with amazement on this stupendous piece of architecture, which in height, solidity, and beauty surpasses all our railway viaducts, and will last as long as any of them. Perhaps some of my readers have seen the remains of the great aqueduct which supplied with water the town of Divodurum, now named Metz.

These works cost much labour, and we do not know how the money was found. Sometimes I have thought that the wealthy citizens of towns combined their means, and formed a society or company, as the Romans used to do, for farming the taxes and working mines. The adventurers would receive their dividends out of the money collected from those who used the water. This is the way in which some English towns have been supplied. Enterprising men have hazarded their capital, and worked hard at their scheme, and in some cases with only small success at first. In time the demand for the water has made the undertaking profitable; and then town councils, who had done nothing in the matter, tell the

people that the town councils should manage the water supply, and the townsmen will have cheaper water, though they know that this is not true, and they are also told that the thing will be better managed by the infallible local patriots. Then these busy men go to the great house at Westminster, and demand possession of the water-works, and get it, at least sometimes, but not without paying well for what they take. The result is that those who had encouraged the undertaking with their money, and at last were paid for their pains, are compelled to look out for other ways of employing their capital. The town councillors and the local patriots have the pleasure of looking after something which they don't understand, and the opportunity of finding clerkships and such offices for their friends or kin. When a town is too beggarly, or not enterprising enough to supply itself with water, the town thus learns the best way of getting it done. Let others do for you what you can't or won't do yourself, and in due time take the business from them.

We cannot reckon as a tax the payments in ancient Rome for the use of the "*foricae*" (*latrines publiques*). These places were farmed at Rome by persons who made it their business: they paid a sum of money to the State, and got their profit out of the payments of their visitors. It was also the fashion at Rome to place at the corners of streets or cross roads large earthen jars

or tubs cut in two for the use of persons who might require them. Such things have I seen in one of the largest French towns, old half tubs put up near a wall for general use, and nothing to pay. I did not inquire whether this was done at the expense of the town, or whether industrious persons placed these casks for the benefit of the public and their own; for the contents might be used both as manure, and for scouring wool.* The Emperor Vespasian, who loved money, and required a good deal for the management of his large empire, compelled the people to use the tubs at Rome, and he also compelled them to pay. The sum paid by each person was no doubt very small, but the Emperor knew that many small sums will make a large sum. The object of this saving Emperor may have been the preservation of decency and of the public health, as well as the getting of money.

This will be enough on Roman taxation to satisfy most readers. If they wish for more, and will take the necessary pains, they may find it. What I have said is not all, but it is correct as far as it goes. I began at the beginning like a true historian, and I have brought the thing as low down as I can: perhaps some people may think too low.

* The author's conjecture may be correct. Such tubs or receptacles are used in England also for the collection of wool-scouring stuff.—ED.



OF TAXATION.

II.

WHEN I reflect on taxation, I reason thus. Government exists and must exist. Government and administration cannot be carried on without money; and if an enemy attacks us, we cannot defend ourselves without the means which money alone can procure. So I perceive the necessity of taxes: I see what they are, and I try to see what I receive in return for my taxes. It has been admitted by a committee of our wise men, who meet at Westminster to manage our affairs, that no government ought to take any money from us unless it is quite certain that we shall have some advantage in return, and an advantage which we cannot have for less money than we pay. This is an excellent principle, and I hope that in time the practice will conform to the theory. At present it is very difficult to estimate the value of

that which we receive in return for that which we are compelled to pay.*

Besides taxes imposed by the Westminster men, we have local taxes or rates, sometimes very heavy. We are told what these taxes are for, and we know that we have something for them; but still we must look sharp and see that the money is honestly and wisely laid out. If it is not, we grumble and do the best that we can to set things right. But it is not easy to look after your money when other men have laid hold of it. The whole amount of these local taxes is a prodigious sum annually, and the sum increases, because the local expenditure increases. We shall have trouble about these taxes sometime.

I have heard, and I have known, that tax-collectors sometimes spend the tax money which they have collected, or run off with it, and then we may be called upon to pay it again. Now there are persons who are appointed to look after tax-collectors, and I entreat the men at Westminster to make a rule that those, whose duty it is to look after the tax-collector, shall pay the money if it is missing.

There was a time within the memory of living

* [Those who would know the various means by which the Imperial Revenue of the United Kingdom was raised in the year ending the 31st day of March, 1869, will find it in a Return ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 11th August, 1869.—ED.]

men, when the bold Briton was taxed in every shape from head to foot, from the cradle to the grave. Life was one long pilgrimage in the land of taxation.* But experience has taught our

* [The citizen of the United States has now taken the place of the Briton, and groans beneath taxation raised to pay the interest on the great debt made during the contest between the North and South, and to support the Protection system. The Protectionist party have attempted to uphold their system and their interests by adopting the popular cry of a "free breakfast table," by which they mean the reduction or abolition of the heavy duties on sugar, tea, and coffee, and they hope thus to maintain the oppressive taxes on other imported articles. The attempt has been ridiculed by Mr. Kerr, a member of the House of Representatives, in a clever speech. "Under our present tariff," he said, "and indeed so long as Government is supported by taxation, the promise or boast of a 'free breakfast table' is simply an able-bodied absurdity, no matter how free you make tea, coffee, and sugar. Let us see. Your table is held together by taxed nails and hinges, and covered with a taxed cloth. Your breakfast is prepared by a cook or a good-wife who is clad from the soles of her feet to the top of her head in taxed clothing. It is prepared in a stove made of taxed iron, over a fire made of taxed coal, kindled with a taxed match"—let our Chancellor of the Exchequer mark this—"and adjusted with taxed shovel and tongs. Your bread is leavened with taxed soda or yeast powders. Your victuals are served to you on taxed dishes and eaten from taxed plates, or drunk out of taxed cups, saucers, or tumblers, with the aid of taxed knives, forks, and spoons. Your food is seasoned with taxed salt, pepper, vinegar, oil, or other condiments. The meal may consist in part of taxed fruits, such as prunes, figs, raisins, or nuts. Your bread, potatoes, and other substantials of daily diet are produced by the farmer by the aid of taxed implements of every kind, and brought to your house over rail-

governors better, and we are now much relieved ; perhaps our present taxation is lighter than that of any nation. Yet more money is raised than formerly, perhaps too much as some think, but we are better able to pay, because there are more of us, and many of us are much richer ; not however all, and I am one of the exceptions. But if we do not take care, the richer we grow the more money will be taken from us. Our increasing wealth will be made the excuse for increasing our public expenditure, as a man often foolishly enlarges his expense as fast as his income, and sometimes faster. Here is a great danger. Our tax makers are become very cunning. When they want a big lump of money, they know exactly where to look for it. They lay their heavy hand not on the poorest, who are a numerous class and might make a great outcry and run some risk of dying of hunger, but they seize those who are

roads or on waggons made of taxed iron and steel. Your good-wife is even compelled to seek culinary wisdom from a 'cook-book' printed on taxed paper with taxed ink and taxed type. Let us reform or abolish all these covert, mean, vexatious, dishonest, and oppressive taxes, that pay much to monopoly and favourites, and little or nothing to the Treasury." This is very amusing, but it is true and very bad, as bad as anything under the old system in England, or what is called the *ancien régime* in France, except that it falls on all. This description of taxation reminds me of something which I have read of former English taxation in an old number of the *Edinburgh Review*, if my memory is right.—ED.]

above this risk, and squeeze them well, as we shall soon see.

A wise man regulates his expenditure by his income, and does not spend more; he ought, if he is truly wise, to spend less. A nation first fixes the expenditure, and then looks about for the ways of raising the money. Things come into this state gradually in the course of long time. The public expenditure of all states known to us has always been increasing, and must increase to some extent, and those who govern must find out the means of supplying what is wanted. If their demands should be so heavy that people cannot pay them without being impoverished, the governors borrow money, and burden themselves and their posterity with an everlasting tax to pay the interest on what is borrowed. If the money was required for a necessary and useful purpose, and the people in the end were more prosperous by virtue of the borrowing, there might be nothing to say against it. But there is always risk of borrowed money being wasted, whether the borrower is one man or a nation.

The English people have been great borrowers, and they have spent the borrowed money principally in fighting everywhere except at home. Perhaps some of the money spent in fighting abroad has saved us the larger expense of fighting the enemy in our own country. But still is it not true, that we have spent enormous sums of

money in fighting, as absurd as Don Quixote's adventures, which he paid for in broken head and battered body, as we also have done, besides squandering our money? We have more sense now, and it is time that we should be wiser, for all the money that we wasted is gone for ever, and we have to pay interest on it to those who lent the money or stand in the place of the lenders. I am glad to know that we are doing a little to pay off this debt, though the payment does not go on very fast. Some men, not wise, would stop this payment of debt, in order that poor folks should pay no taxes on anything that they use. But this won't do. We must all help to pay off our debt, and I hope this first duty of honesty will never be forgotten.*

The comparison of a state's expenditure with a man's expenditure is not completely just, not more just than many other comparisons, but still it is useful. If government is for the general interest, it is for the general interest that there should be taken from the people the smallest sum that is necessary for good administration, and it should

* [It is said that this debt in 1815 amounted to £902,000,000, and that between 1815 and 1871 we have paid off £177,000,000, though we have in the intermediate period also added to the debt on various accounts, which include a fighting debt of £34,000,000 for the war in the Crimea. Still we have about £796,000,000 of debt, which includes the capital represented in terminable annuities. *Speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2nd of June, 1871.*—ED.]

be taken in such form as is most consistent with fair dealing to all, most convenient to the tax payer, and least injurious to the production of more wealth. If things were managed in this way, we should all have more to spend in our own fashion. It is true that a man does not always spend his money wisely, but no man can look after the expenditure of his neighbour. If money is wasted, he who wastes it must suffer the consequences. I have a profound respect for all who govern; but I care not for seeing them, or even hearing of them through the tax-collector, and I would rather spend my money as I like than trust any government with it.

It is pleasant, after passing your young days in a constant struggle with the plague of taxation, to find old age, which brings many troubles, relieved of some of the tortures of taxation, for if you did not pay many of the old taxes yourself, you paid them in the end by paying more for what you bought. But what a hard fight it has been to get rid of bad taxes. We have long paid a tax on houses, and though the tax increases the cost of living in a house,* as most of us do, except a few who, like some old Nomads, live in big

* [The tendency of all taxes on houses is to lower the rents of houses; for he who takes a house reckons all the taxes and rates upon the house as something added to his rent, and therefore he will not or cannot pay so high a rent as he would pay if there were no taxes on houses. But in a country

boxes on wheels, and even in old boats, still it would not be easy to name a better tax. But was it prudent to tax the bricks with which the house was built, and the timber, and then to tax them again under the name of house, as was once done? But the brick tax is gone and the timber tax too. Thanks, everlasting thanks to him and to them who have given us cheaper wine, and better wine too; and may we never have our wine taken from us by those who don't care about drinking it themselves. We ought to be thankful also to the men who gave us good cheap glass, instead of bad and dear glass, and allowed old fellows like myself to build little glass rooms for ourselves and our wives and children to put plants in and flowers, and to give work to the poor glass makers, and to those who build our glass rooms. Thanks from servant girls and others who can now advertise for what they want without being taxed for making their wants known; and many thanks for all who can now read untaxed newspapers, and send their letters by post for a penny, and buy untaxed bread and other useful things cheaper and better than in former days. Finally I propose a general thanksgiving for all these mercies.

where population and wealth increase, there is an increasing demand for houses, and particularly for houses in good situations; and the result is that the demand sometimes raises the rent more than the taxes depress it. This fact is well known.—ED.]

It ought to be remarked, for the benefit of those who do not think, and they are a very large body, that the payment we make for the carriage of letters and parcels by post is not a tax, though the government calls it so. It is certainly not like any other tax, for it is only paid by those who send letters and parcels, and we have in return for the payment a direct equivalent, or more than an equivalent. We receive a return for our money as prompt as when we pay a common carrier for carrying our goods. The government certainly does not allow private persons to be letter-carriers for money; but the work is done for us very well, and at a very small cost, and still there is a large profit after paying all expenses, which profit is used for the purposes of administration, and so far eases us of other taxes.

I have a remark to make which I shall make here, for fear that I may forget it. The men of the House of Commons lay the taxes on us. Many of these men are rich in lands, or rich in money, or both, and they should so lay the taxes that they shall feel them as much as any body, and in just proportion to their paying powers. I will not affirm that they have at all times done this. There are a few poor men among these rich tax makers, men comparatively poor, and I hope for all reasons that they will never be very numerous. There are also men who help to lay on taxes, and live on taxes, or receive some of

the tax money. Some of them may be useful, but we will hope that the number will not increase.

The nature of taxation should be explained in schools : it should be a part of school education, as it is a branch of that useful science named public or political economy, in which we English may truly say that John Bull is before other nations, even before Jonathan over the water. In fact Jonathan does not know the A B C of the matter. Don't be alarmed at this proposal. Some of the fundamental principles of this science can be explained to the poorest children, not from books, but from the mouth of a man who understands the matter. The proof of the thing being possible is that it has been done. These useful lessons must begin with the simplest elementary principles known to poor children from their own experience. These children would learn their lessons quicker than the children of the rich. They hardly need to be taught that if their parents do not work, they will have nothing to eat. It is easy to lead them to the general conclusion, that everything which we use is produced by labour, and can only be bought by other labour, or by the money which is received for labour. A poor child may have observed that if his father is a drunkard and irregular, he loses his work, and the teacher may easily lead him to the general conclusion that all such men may lose their work, and that a master will pay a sober

steady man better than a man whom he cannot trust.

The children of richer or of rich parents are often inconceivably stupid in economical matters compared with the children of the poor, as stupid as many of the parents are. They know not whence comes their bread, nor their clothes, nor anything which they see and use every day. I pity these poor creatures of ignorance, and I shall see if I can do a little to enlighten them. When the poor, who must live by labour, have well learned my lessons, they must be taught not to expect help from others, nor to depend on foolish giving, which is falsely called charity, and will ruin us if it is not stopped.

I am in despair about strong drink other than wine, which is chiefly used by us who are the wise, the moderate, and possess all the virtues. Spirituous liquors and beer are two powers hard to deal with. Shall we who do not care for them, or who can keep them in our cellars, prevent men from drinking them in the drinking shops? If we should ever try to accomplish this end, we shall see what man's ingenuity can do. Some will get the drink or die in the attempt. If we could stop the drink completely, and thus save drinkers all the money which they spend or waste, can any man foresee in what form the repressed drinking force will break out? Our men do drink too much, and they often drink bad stuff. If it

were made cheaper by being taxed less, they would certainly drink more. Many of them are poor enough and stupid enough already. It is a principle of good taxation that no necessities of life should be taxed. Necessaries are salt, bread, leather in this country to make shoes of, fuel, soap, and candles to work by when the nights are long, and matches to light the candles with. All these things have been taxed in England, except matches I believe. Soap, which we use for washing clothes, and occasionally for cleaning hands and faces, is a necessary. It was not thought so, I suppose, when the taxman got above a million a year out of soap; but in those days washing of all kinds was considered a luxury, and discouraged by this sumptuary tax. Spirits are not a necessity, not more than opium; and as it is certainly part of the business of Government to keep the people as sober as they can, spirits ought to be heavily taxed, so that the very poor cannot get much of them, and those who are not poor may make a good contribution to the public purse when they indulge in fire-water. Beer is not a necessity. A man may live without it even in Great Britain. It is a luxury, and therefore should be taxed on the principle by which we tax a man's coach and horses. Wholesome beer, when you can get it, is supposed to be good for a working man in moderate quantities: but it is wise to tax the malt of which it is made, because the beer drinker thus contri-

butes voluntarily to the revenue. If he does not drink the beer, he does not pay the malt tax. Beer taxation therefore comes under the head of sumptuary laws, and the beer taxing law is much wiser than some laws which have been named sumptuary.

We have one wonderful tax, which is not a tax: it is a fine.* There are associations named insurance companies, which for a very moderate sum will insure your house, or shop, or factory, or furniture, almost anything, against the risk of fire. When you pay your insurance money you receive a paper on which the amount of the company's charge is stated. The same paper also informs you that the State, making the insurance office the agent for the wicked purpose, fines you for your precaution in securing your property; and the amount of the fine is sometimes twice the amount which the company demands. The first time that you pay the fine, which is called by the specious name of a "duty," you are amazed at the impudence of the demand. You find that you are punished for doing an act of prudence, which if neglected might bring ruin on yourself, on your family and others who work for you, and send all of you to the parish. Do not suppose that the in-

* [This was written before the fine on fire insurance was abolished after much resistance from men in office. The history of this fine is worth recording. It should never be forgotten.—ED.]

ventor of the tax wished to deter you from insuring. No, he did not intend that; he only thought of getting some money out of you. He reasoned thus: the man has property, he can pay insurance money, and I will ease him of a little more. It is just the case which Caesar mentions: Any name will serve as an excuse for taking a man's money. But why do not the Westminster men fine those who do not insure their combustible property? Can they answer this question? In many other also of our ordinary transactions in which money is stirring, the taxman does not show himself, but he has a sly way of insinuating his demand, and he says through others, "Stop, there: I see you are passing money, let me have some"; and he will have it. If you go to your banker for some of the money which you have lent him, the taxman steps in again, not in person, but as Stamp. He only asks for a copper as beggars do, but he always gets it, and beggars do not. It is a sum taken direct from your capital, but it is a very little sum. Something more about Stamp soon.





OF TAXATION.

III.

IF we were making a settlement in a new land, as the early Greeks did in Sicily, Southern Italy and other countries, we should take with us men, women and capital, and our customs, religion and political institutions, as the Greeks also did. In new countries the supply of labouring people may be insufficient, or it may be too large; and as there might be, and sometimes is a disproportion between those who live by labour, and the capital of those who wish to employ it profitably, difficulties would immediately exist. The Greeks took some slaves with them to their colonies, often enslaved the peoples among whom they settled, and bought from dealers more slaves when they wanted them. They would find slave labour profitable at first, but they thus introduced an element which ultimately impedes improvement and tends to the destruction of society. We have ceased to employ

slave labour, and so far our new settlements escape the danger which is inherent in slavery.

But order must be established in new countries, and as bad luck pursues us wherever we go, it would be necessary to build prisons and secure the services of police, jailors, justices and even the hangman, to protect the new society against internal enemies. This disturbing principle would perhaps cost as much as the expenses of civil administration, and taxation would begin and increase. With our present experience it might be possible in a new settlement to make a system of taxation which should be equitable and cause little hindrance to the exercise of industry and the production of wealth; but it is more probable, as men are not very wise, that taxation would be imposed in conformity with usages which the settlers would carry with them, and as more taxes were wanted, they would be levied in the way in which money might be most easily got, as the fashion has been in old countries.

The settlers in North America began under favourable circumstances. The country was thinly inhabited by natives, whom the settlers did not and could not enslave: they made slaves of the imported black man, not largely in the northern settlements, but very freely in the southern colonies. The natives, who lived chiefly by hunting, gradually disappeared before the white man, for such people cannot exist where the man, called

civilized, makes his home and wants the land. In a short time the white man seized the land, and so successful has he been in extirpating the wild man, that from the shores of the Atlantic to the broad Pacific Ocean, the natives who still remain are very few, and those few live in a miserable state, and will in time lose all the land which is worth taking. Thus the Americans of the United States have obtained an unlimited supply of fertile soil, and are able to receive annually many thousands of emigrants from Europe. Their taxation at first was very light, but they fell into bad habits through ignorance, which they learned from Europe, and would not allow themselves to use imported foreign articles without imposing heavy duties on them, being misled by the silly notion that they ought to encourage the making or producing such articles at home before they were able to do it as cheap as foreigners, and not seeing that if they would only wait a little, the time would come when they would be able profitably to establish most branches of industry. After quarrelling among themselves about this taxation, they came at last to blows about this and other matters, and they are now an example of the richest people in the world in natural resources labouring under the worst taxation ; a people who call themselves free, and yet are the slaves of the taxman.

If these things happen where man has been

placed in the most favourable circumstances, what must taxation be in countries where it has existed time out of mind, and where the increasing wants of governments have been for centuries requiring new taxes, which have generally been imposed, not in the way which does least harm, for all taxation does harm to industry, but in the way by which it was supposed that the money could most easily be got in ?

The difficulty of revising the whole system of taxation in an old country is very great, and the wisest men would most clearly see the impossibility of doing it. We can only improve a little now and then. Perhaps by continually working at the business, we may discover means of equitably imposing taxes which we have not yet tried. But it is an affair of hazard, and it is possible and probable that our men who have a talent for finance, which may be only a disposition to meddle with that which they do not understand, might make things worse, if they attempted a complete change.

The examination of the taxation of an old country is so big a thing ; so “immersed in matter ;” and so difficult is it to trace all the effects of a tax, that no single man could undertake the labour, even if he had the time and the means, and the wisdom of Solomon besides. We have a chief taxer, called the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and what is his business ? Every year he must provide by taxation an enormous and generally an

increasing sum of money to meet an inevitable want ; and his best schemes may be spoiled by the men around him, who are always complaining of something and have their own notions of mending things, and are often more ready to help him to spend than to save money. The whole business is a chaos of confusion, and we wait in vain to see chaos reduced to order.

All that I can do is to attempt to find out what some taxes are, and if I make mistakes, I may lead people to think about taxation and improve it, if they can.

We have a tax named Income Tax, which under one name comprehends different things. The world is governed by names. For a name men will fight and die ; and in the name of a name men cheat one another and deceive themselves. When you hear a name, which is a cover, a cloak, take off the covering and see what is under it, and you will often be surprised at what you find. This income tax must be examined in the same way, but we must settle a few matters first.

There is a thing which we call property, and it is of two kinds, as the Roman lawyers said, things moveable and things immoveable. Moveable things are those which can be moved without being changed in their nature. Things immoveable are land and all that is permanently fixed in and on the land, the trees which grow in it, and the buildings which are on it. If you have a lake or a pond on your ground, it is

still land in a legal sense, for you may be sure that your lake or pond rests on your land. If you pull down a house, you have no longer a house; you have only stone or bricks and wood and rubbish. I have heard of men moving whole houses in America, but such eccentric proceedings are beyond my subject. Immoveable things can be valued and taxed, either on the whole capital value or on the annual value or produce. Ships are made for moving and are moved, and they could be taxed in this country, because they are registered. Sometimes there may be a difficulty in saying whether a thing is moveable or immoveable. The fundholder and government annuitant may ask whether their property, as they may call it, is moveable or immoveable. I shall not say which it is, but I will comfort these good people by telling them that their property in one sense is immoveable, and will remain so in spite of the talk of a few knaves and fools. They may move about themselves as much as they please, and they will still receive their dividends and annuities. But the income tax will be deducted from their dividends and annuities; and it is properly named an income tax, for the dividend or annuity comes in to them in respect of a title or property for which money has been paid.* They are taxed under Schedule C, "in respect" of this income.

* [The annuitant is not fairly charged on his annuity. He has transferred his capital to the State, which gives him a

If a man has shares in railways or other home undertakings, or has shares in foreign stocks, or holds foreign bonds, he cannot escape the income tax. Those who pay the man his money do the taxing work, and hand over what they retain to the great tax spender. This will give the inquiring taxpayer a notion of an income tax. It is a sum of money taken from his annual receipts "in respect," as the great tax collector says, of something which is property and brings in to a man an annual sum. If the poor man receives no dividend on his shares, he has the consolation of paying no income tax on them.

If all taxes, which are included under the name of income tax, were as simple as those which I have described, there would be no reason for saying any more.

It has been sometimes laid down as a doctrine in the science of political economy that taxes ought to come out of income, and not directly out of capital. If taxes were generally raised by a

larger annual sum than the ordinary interest of capital. The State has his money, and pays part of the annuity out of such interest as it can make out of this money; and it pays the remainder of the annuity out of the money with which the man purchased his annuity. So he receives back annually part of what was his capital, and the State makes him pay an income tax on part of a capital which is no longer his. If the man lives long enough, he will have received back all his capital, and he need not grumble if he pays income tax when his annuity is paid out of other money, which never was his.—ED.]

direct deduction from capital, the great tax receiver would soon be in the condition of the foolish man who killed a certain goose which laid golden eggs. We have in England some very heavy taxes on capital, as we shall see; but at present we are considering taxes on income derived from property.

Land and buildings may be estimated at an annual value, whether the owner occupies or lets them. If a man occupies his own land and buildings, he derives from them an annual value, which may be estimated by the rent paid for like land and buildings. If he lets his house, the tenant pays the landlord's income tax on the rent, and deducts it from the rent which he pays to the landlord.* When we know what the rent is which is paid for the use of land and buildings, we have a test of their annual value. But when a man occupies his own land and buildings, sometimes it may not be easy to fix or assess, as it is named, the annual value. What is the annual value of a house which is too big for any man to live in except the owner, or the few who are as rich as the

* [In the Parliamentary tax return of 1869 the income tax (Schedule B) "in respect of the occupation of lands, is 3*d.* in the pound for England, and 2½*d.* for Scotland and Ireland. In the same return (Schedule A), the income tax "in respect of lands, tenements, &c." is 6*d.* If the owner occupies his own land, he pays income tax both as owner and as occupant.—ED.]

owner and generally have big houses of their own ?

If property does not bring in an annual income, the tax man can get nothing out of it "in respect" of income. A man's hat, shoes, and other habiliments are his property when he has paid for them, and also when he has bought them on credit and got possession of them. So it is with his walking stick and his watch ; but we do not tax any of this property. Watches may perhaps be taxed some day, and pictures and other valuable things for the same reason that we tax a man's coach.

This property which produces no income, but in fact causes cost to the proprietor, as in the case of a watch which requires repairs, or of furniture which is destroyed by use, only escapes the tax man while the owner lives. When he dies, it is considered by the State a proper opportunity for taxing his watch, and everything that he leaves behind him. His watch is valued, and his books and his boots too ; or they ought to be, and a tax is paid on the estimated capital value.

I have spoken of a personage named Stamp. I do not know when he was born, but he will never die so long as this island is inhabited. He does not show himself, but he collects a huge amount of money, near ten millions a year by means of papers and parchments on which he places certain marks, and when you require these marked papers and parchment, as you often do, you must pay

money to Stamp's agents, who are everywhere, and the agents send the money to Stamp's London office. When you die, the State gets through Stamp the amount which is deducted from the capital value of your watch. In fact Stamp is the collector of the charges on probates of wills, letters of administration of the property of deceased persons, testamentary inventories, and on legacies and successions. Some of Stamp's demands on capital are exorbitant. If a friend or anybody, who is not your kinsman, leaves you a legacy, without saying that it must be paid free from duty, you must surrender one tenth of the legacy as a tax. You take your nine tenths of the testator's capital which he has given you, and the State seizes the other tenth. This has always seemed to me an act of rapacity to which the State must have been driven in a fit of extreme hunger. If the testator leaves his capital to his kinsfolk, the State takes a part in this case also, but a moderate sum compared with the ten per cent.

Stamp meddles with all kinds of business, where money is stirring; with the sale of lands, houses and shares; with the property of dead men when the living come to take possession of it; with patents for inventions and patent medicines, such as Morrison's famous pills; he even does not neglect divorce and matrimonial causes, but he does not get much there. Whenever stamped paper is required, there is Stamp. He does not

care what kind of jobs he undertakes. If you are bent on entering into the holy state of matrimony, and require the assistance of the licence or certificate of a superintendent registrar, Stamp must have ten shillings. Marriage, I believe, costs something even in the cheapest form. Do the State and the Church and other religious bodies wish to discourage matrimony by making it cost something, or do they only take the opportunity of easing a man of some money at a time when he is supposed to be less careful about it? Some of Stamp's taxes finally fall on the consumers, as in the case of patent medicines, pills and the like; and this is very just. He who is so foolish as to swallow this physic ought to pay for his folly, and Stamp's bill too. Stamp does not care where the money comes from which he receives. A large part of it comes out of capital, and if the State cannot do without the money, there still remains the fact that these taxes diminish the funds for productive labour.

I have said that I do not know when Stamp was born. Perhaps he is not so old as the great fire of London. He may know himself, for I suppose that his birth or baptism was registered. He has children in other countries who follow the father's profession, for governments have found out how useful they are in bringing in money. A wise man has said: "There is no art which one government sooner learns of another than that

of draining money from the pockets of the people."

The taxman cannot raise all the money which the State requires by taking it directly from men's income, or the annual produce of property, not even with Stamp's assistance in his peculiar way. We raise above twenty-one millions annually (net produce) by Customs' Duties, or duties on things brought into the country; and also above twenty-one millions, gross produce, under the head of Inland Revenue or Excise. Here is an amount of more than forty millions of pounds produced by two heads of taxation; and we cannot help wondering how this great sum is raised and how it is spent. However, it is certain that it is raised, and certain also that it is spent in some way. The man who brings things into the country pays the customs' duty, and it is a direct tax on him, a sum taken from the capital which he employs in his business. But when he sells his imported things, he adds the tax and something more to the price of his wares; and so he gets back the tax which he has paid, and also he gains or should gain something on the adventure; and this something is named profit. Whenever any person buys from him who bought of the importer, he must also pay the original tax, or a due proportion of it, and something besides to the seller, which something is the seller's profit. So the thing goes on, let it be a bottle of wine, till it comes to

him who drinks it and finally pays in the price both profits and tax, often without knowing. This is an ingenious way of raising taxes. Those who use the taxed article do not pay the tax until they want the article ; and if they never use it, they never pay the tax. He who does not befoul his mouth with tobacco, does not pay for those who do : they chew and smoke and tax themselves at the same time. This is self-taxation, but it is named indirect taxation. I have heard it said in the old times that for the pleasure of chewing and blowing smoke out of the mouth, Britons altogether paid enough to supply all the smoke which our big ships blow out of big guns, and the cost of the ships too, and the wages of the men in them. I am not sure that this was exactly true. It certainly is not true now, for though the State receives above six millions annually as a tax on tobacco, we have greatly increased our expenditure on big ships and big guns.

But these indirect taxes must not be very heavy ; if they are, the taxman will not receive as much as he expects, for he, who finally pays the tax in the price, will purchase less of the taxed articles. It is a wonderful discovery of our times, that more can be got by these indirect taxes when they are comparatively small than when they are very large. It may seem strange to the ignorant that by taking less the State receives more ; but the wise understand how it is so.

We all know that the tax called the income tax has been useful and has been used for the purpose of reducing the indirect taxes on articles of consumption, and also for supplying means for fighting, for which reason I have heard it named a war tax ; but this is idle talk. So far as the income tax has really been an income tax, it has been well applied for the abolition or diminution of some of the indirect taxes ; but if a part of it is not an income tax, and is something else, the name has been abused. I have said that it is idle talk to speak of it as a war tax, for this implies that when we go to war, a certain class only must pay the expense of fighting. If the war is necessary, it is reasonable that all persons should contribute to the cost. We ought not to forget that we had painful experience of this war tax under a feeble Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last year of the Crimean war, when he raised the tax to sixteen pence in the pound, sixteen pence on the wages of many hard working men.*

* [It is one of the worst things in this tax that it is continually increased or diminished. There is no stability in it. The tax is now (from April, 1872) fourpence in the pound. It is strange, or perhaps it is not, that the higher the rate is, the less is the productiveness of the additional pence. The reason seems to be that those who make returns to the taxman, take care "to do themselves justice," as I have heard some men express it, when the tax is too high for their notion of justice. A writer, who writes in 1872, says : "Mr. Lowe stated that

Adam Smith, a great authority and a name justly respected, lays down four maxims of taxation, two of which I shall mention, after remarking that it is easier to make general rules than to apply them. The first maxim is that the "subjects of every State ought to contribute towards the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities, that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State." The second maxim is this, "the tax which each individual is bound to pay ought to be certain, not arbitrary; the time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor and to every other person." This second maxim will be universally accepted, I suppose.

The first maxim may not be quite true; but Adam Smith (I must repeat his full name, for he ought not to be confounded with other members of this numerous family), says, "as nearly as possible." Some writers have concluded from this maxim that "land, personalty, and earnings," ought to contribute equally towards the necessities of the state. These persons include the wages of

within three years more than £12,000,000 of debt have been paid off; and he might have added that one fourth of the amount has been unnecessarily extorted from income tax payers by the addition of twopence in the pound under the third Budget of 1871."—Ed.]

labour under the term "earnings." They say, and truly, I believe, that those who are too poor to pay direct taxes, and who pay indirect taxes on sugar, tea, coffee, and some other articles, pay more in proportion to their abilities than those who can pay both direct and indirect taxes ; and this is urged as a reason for exempting the wages of the working classes, a very indefinite term, from a tax on their wages. But Adam Smith did not mean "wages," when he used the word "revenue." In his remarks on the wages of labour, he declares taxes on these wages to be "absurd and destructive." He admits that "while the demand for labour and the price of provisions remain the same, a direct tax on the wages of labour can have no other effect than to raise them somewhat higher than the tax." But he admits that if taxes on the wages of labour have not always had this effect, "it is because they have generally occasioned a considerable fall in the demand for labour." In France, before the great revolution, the "taille" included a charge on the industry of workmen and day labourers in country villages. It was one of the many grievous sufferings of the French poor out of which grew the volcanic fury of the revolution, an event, which as De Tocqueville says, came out of all that preceded it.

Adam Smith also says that a tax "on the recompense of ingenious artists, and of men of liberal professions could have no other effect than

to raise it somewhat higher than in proportion to the tax." He thinks that "emoluments of public offices can in most cases very well bear to be taxed;" which is not said with his usual good sense. He also says, "that it was very popular to lay a real tax of five shillings and sixpence in the pound upon the salaries of offices which exceeded a hundred pounds a year." This was certainly a most unreasonable tax. The pay of the officers of the army and navy and a few others was excepted from this tax. He concludes, "there are in England no other direct taxes upon the wages of labour."

Schedule D of the income tax is in respect of professions, trades, employments, railways, mines, ironworks, &c." It is, in fact, "in respect" of profits and wages.

Some men possess or hire buildings, and buy matter, it may be cotton, wool, iron; and they have machines which they must buy or hire; and they have money, or borrow it, with which they pay men for their labour. They convert this matter into a new form, and sell it; and then they have, or ought to have, in the price of that which they sell, all that they have expended and also a sum equivalent to ordinary interest on all the capital employed, and something more still which is profit, which profit enables them to convert more matter into the form in which people will use it. If they are successful, they can put by, or

invest some of their profit and buy land with it or anything else. Some men take old rags or anything which will serve their purpose, and turn it into paper. Another man takes some of this paper and covers it with black marks in regular lines: he calls this printing. The paper maker and the printer have buildings and machinery, and pay wages to those who work for them. The printer does not undertake to make the paper more valuable by blackening it; in fact he sometimes makes it less valuable, but not intentionally. He leaves the speculation of blackening white paper to the publisher, or to any man who has a passion for buying paper and paying a printer to print on it. The publisher takes back his paper, when it is properly blacked, folds it, puts some kind of cover on it, or pays a man to do it for him, and calls the converted rags by the new name of book, which he sells when he can. Out of these books he makes a profit, but sometimes he finds that there is a loss. Out of this profit, the taxman claims a part under the name of income tax, the same name that he gives to the tax which he takes out of the rent of a dwelling-house or the dividends on stock.

There must be many reckonings before the book maker can ascertain his profit. I have never made books, I mean the outward and visible material book, nor have I made leather, or hats, or gin, and I do not know how the reckoning of

profit is made, but profit must be made or the manufacturing business cannot go on. A farmer, who hires land, produces by his capital and his care, with the aid of labourers, wheat, barley, and food for beasts which makes them fit for man's food. He also makes a profit, or he cannot continue to go on. If he is skilful in buying lean beasts, Irish for example, and has food for them, he may make a large profit. He pays only three pence in the pound, "in respect of the occupation of lands," when other people pay sixpence in the pound on their income. He does not pay income tax on his profits, but he pays half the income tax on his rent. This is not really an income tax; it is a tax estimated on the sum which he pays his landlord. Perhaps the reason may be that farmers often do not keep good accounts, and that the taxman could not get what he calls income tax out of most of them in any other way.*

If a tax is levied on the produce of capital employed in industry, it should not be levied on the profit, but on a smaller sum. Adam Smith ob-

* [By the latest edition of the income tax all persons who have incomes less than £300 a year, may deduct £80, and thus reduce the taxable income to £220. These are miserable shifts to stop grumbling. Some persons' incomes, which are below £300 a year, are taxed when they receive their annuities and dividends. They are, therefore, entitled to be repaid what they have paid on £80. Let them try to get it back. I warrant that most of them will not try twice.—ED.]

serves : "The revenue or profit arising from stock, naturally divides itself into two parts ; that which pays the interest and which belongs to the owner of the stock ; and that surplus part, which is over and above what is necessary for paying the interest. This latter part of the profit is evidently a subject not taxable directly. It is the compensation and in most cases it is no more than a very moderate compensation for the risk and the trouble of employing the stock." Those may answer this who can.

If the State will have something "in respect of" a man's profits, how much should it be ? If he has a profit of a thousand a year arising from adventuring his capital in some industrial employment and paying wages, for such employment is a venture and he may sometimes lose by it ; a profit arising also from his own skill and superintendence ; ought he to pay as much as a man pays on a thousand a year derived from rent of land or any other invested capital ? He who makes profits either uses them in extending his business and giving more employment to labour, or he invests them in some way, and then the annual proceeds of his investment are ripe for the true income tax. Some men, who have large capitals and ability, make very large profits ; and this is the reason why the taxman is so eager to tax their profits. It is the old story again ; any name will serve as an excuse for taxing. But if the taxman would

abstain from touching the profits of the year, he would have next year all that he can fairly demand, either by getting more in an honest way out of the interest on larger stock employed or by taking it from the income of invested profits. A man may invest part of his profits during the year in which he pays a tax on them, and he may also in the same year pay true income tax out of the income of these invested profits. Thus he may in the same year pay a tax on the capital sum which comes from profits, and a real income tax on such part of this taxed capital as he invests in that year. I call his profits a capital sum, and such they are. He gains the sum "in respect of" profits, but when he has got it, this sum is a capital, which, as I have said, he may either invest in extending his business or in some other way.

This tax on profits does not conform to Adam Smith's second rule; but what does the taxman care for that? The tax is not fixed and certain, for the taxman must and does depend on the taxpayer's return of his profits; and we know that the return is not always truly made. The assessors may inquire into the state of the man's business, which is not pleasant to him. Sometimes at a venture they increase the man's return, and if he makes no resistance, the tax is levied on the increased return. A rich man may care little about the tax on his profits, but it is the terror of small dealers who come within the taxed limits.

Poor schoolkeepers, who just live, and at the close of the year make both ends meet, are liable to be taxed "in respect" of the so-called profit, which they get "in respect" of maintaining themselves and their families out of the sum which their scholars pay. A tax which may cause an inquiry into a man's affairs, a tax which may be and is evaded, a tax which leads to lying and concealment, would be a good tax for Tunis, but it is a hateful and unjust tax in England. Ye men of Westminster, have you no feeling for your poor profits-paying-tax-on constituents? Remember, when they have learned to understand this business, they have a whip which you have put in their hands, and I hope they will apply it to your well-deserving backs. You may say or some of you, who rule and govern and tax and spend, may say, that all taxes named income tax are easily collected, that you want the money, and that if you don't get it in that way, the taxpayers, as the Emperor Augustus said of his succession tax, will feel it in some worse way. The necessity for the tax, because no other can be found, is an assumption; the necessity because you want it is an argument which you have imported from Tunis or Egypt, the antient and present land of bondage. Can't you reduce your wants? just try; I think that you can. You will see that it is only a part of the so-called income tax, which I ask you to consider and apply your wisdom to.

What I have said on profit-taxes will apply to wages-taxes. Many of us live on the wages of labour, which is sometimes named the labourer's capital. Whatever you call it, 'tis all that he has to offer in exchange for wages. I prefer calling his wages his capital when he has received them. A man may save part of his wages, if he can ; and some do save. If he cannot save anything out of his wages, he will consume them as they come in. There are weekly wages, and monthly wages, and quarterly. Wages paid quarterly are generally, not always, called salaries. We generally call wages by the name of salaries, when they are of a larger annual amount than common wages. But the name is immaterial. Wages are payments made "in respect" of labour or services of some kind ; and they vary from a few shillings a week to hundreds a year and sometimes thousands. When wages are large, they excite the cupidity of the taxman, and he tries to lay hold of them. Those, who think that this cupidity is a reasonable desire which ought to be gratified, would agree about taxing wages, simply because they are large, and would not tax small wages because they are small. There is no consistency in this. If you resolve to tax wages "in respect" of being wages, you resolve to tax all wages ; and if you don't tax all, you should tax none. If you do not tax the poor labourer's wages you contradict yourself ; but the taxman would not trouble himself about consist-

ency. All that he cares for is the getting of a good round sum total. If you will not tax the lowest wages, where will you begin? At a hundred a year wages or where? Then your man of ninety-nine pounds a year wages is excused: your hundred and hundred and one and so on must pay. You cannot with any justice fix an amount of wages at which you will begin to tax. Those who laid this tax on wages took good care to call it by another name in the hope of escaping detection; but they are found out, and when they are called to account, they must be prepared to defend a tax on wages, which is a tax not on all wages, but on some. I am curious to see what they will say.

It would be possible to tax all wages. Those who pay them might be required, under a penalty, to keep and produce a book, in which they should enter all wages which they pay, to deduct from the wages the income tax and hand it over to the taxman. I am not recommending this plan, for I propose to put an end to taxes on wages. If all wages were taxed, what a troublesome amount of book-keeping we should have. Life would be one continuous tax fever, and some of us would be glad to depart in order to be rid of our sufferings; as I have read that negroes in the old West Indian times, would destroy themselves in the belief that their souls would wander back to Africa and they would escape from their taskmasters. The wages tax properly enforced might produce the same

effect among us, if we were as simple as these poor black men.

It is necessary to show that some things are either not wages, or are properly taxed. Here the sharp critic will say, I have caught you in an inconsistency. I answer, not yet. Ordinary wages are paid by contract between employer and employed, and the employed may be dismissed at the pleasure of the employer. There are wages which are as secure as a man's property, and they should be taxed for that reason, if we will tax wages. Pensions are not wages. They are a reward for past services or supposed services, and pensions are secure. The government pays wages to many people. If a man receives wages for an office which he holds so long as he discharges the duties properly, he has an advantage over a man who receives a salary during the pleasure of another. All persons who have a life interest in a place or office, the wages of which are secured on some permanent property, or paid by the state are as equitably taxed "in respect" of their income as he who has a life interest in a landed estate or in an invested sum of money. The difference is this: the man who has property has also the trouble of looking after it, and sometimes loses his rents or part of them; the other man has often no trouble at all except to receive his money. Judges of all kinds, bishops, deans, canons, and beneficed clergymen may be equitably

taxed, though I know that the beneficed clergyman is taxed pretty heavily in other ways. Deans, and bishops, I suppose, are not liable to lose any of their pay except by the deduction of the income tax.

I have heard all kinds of talk about the incomes of professional men, as we name some persons; and I have heard silly people name a professional man's skill and industry his capital. Is it so? When he dies, how is it estimated for the probate duty? Among these professional men we may reckon lawyers, doctors, painters, sculptors, architects, civil engineers, and many others, some of whom receive annually large sums. The services of these men are recompensed by money; and the money is either wages or of the nature of wages, hire or payment for something which they do. They are not the persons who directly work on or with matter, or only in a small degree. A painter only works with brush and paint on canvas, when he makes a likeness of your manly face or the beautiful face of your wife. Some doctors do deal in matter; they send you physic, for which they charge you something. Most of their physic is mixed matter, and so they are in this respect of the manufacturing class. They also give you what is termed advice: I mean, they give it for money.

When the income tax is reformed, there may be difficulties about determining whether certain wages should be taxed; but I think that the difficulties may be settled by a little consideration, for

the principle which will lead to a decision is this : are the wages secured to a man for life or during good behaviour ; or is the continuance of the wages uncertain ? If I am alive when this reformation is made, I offer my services to the country in settling all difficulties, and I shall ask for no wages.

The business of taxation is almost infinite. I could say more, but if I do I shall tire the reader : and yet all this is written for his benefit, and not my own. I hope that he will live to see the coming of the wise taxman, and the just. In the meantime, in addition to the thanksgiving proposed for the good things which we have received from our modern tax-masters, I propose to rouse them to do more. I propose a commination service against them for taxing our wages, and trying to make us believe that they are taxing our incomes.

Thomas Jefferson, once President of the United States, left his epitaph written by himself. He lies on the side of a mountain in Virginia, and close to the road by which you reach the summit, where he lived. In this epitaph he says nothing of having been President. This is all : "Here lies buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia." When our great tax-master dies, who is perhaps not yet born, we will bury him with regal pomp in Westminster Abbey,

OF TAXATION.

and write on his stone, "Here lies buried the m̃ who never took a tax under a false name, and imposed his demands on all with impartiality and justice."

When the learned Varro was in his eightieth year, he addressed to his wife, Fundania, a small book on farming, that she might be the better able to manage an estate which she had bought. I, who am older than Varro, and not so learned, have nothing to leave except this little book and my wishes for the happiness of my countrymen. I give them an old man's blessing and an old man's advice. Don't run after foolish bawlers and brawlers who would lead you to seek what you cannot get, and what would do you no good if you could get it. Don't trouble yourselves about changing an old Kingdom into a Republic. It is a Republic already, as every man knows who has any political knowledge, and a better republic than foolish men would make. Don't trouble yourselves about abolishing the House of Lords ; they will do the thing themselves when the proper time comes, if ever it shall come. Be sober and industrious, for sobriety and industry are an income which cannot be taken from you, or taxed. Look after your taxes and the public expenditure. Take no heed of those who talk of our great and increasing wealth. It is only an excuse for taking more from you, and there are men who will do it if they can. Think of the enormous public expenditure : fix the amount

362 - your memory, and try to form some notion of
th' the prodigious sum. If you do really think, you
will not believe that modern States can continue
to increase their demands on the people without
causing some terrible calamity, which may over-
take your children. The time may come, I believe
that it will come, when the expenditure of States,
if it goes on increasing as it has gone on for the
last quarter of a century, will bring inevitable re-
volution, which is a dreadful name and a more
dreadful thing. You can meet and talk as much
as you like, and write too. Meet often, talk as
much as you please, and think more. You will
talk some nonsense, but there will be men who will
set you right, and when you have wandered into
nonsense, thank the men who have discovered your
blunders, and begin your labours again. If you
attack excessive expenditure and bad taxes by fair
means, why should you not succeed as well as
those who attack your governors by unfair means,
and bully and abuse them? When you have set
taxation right, and reduced the public expenditure,
and have also reduced your own waste by drink-
ing too much and in other foolish ways, you will
be one of the most prosperous peoples on the face
of the earth. After all this is done, you will still
find enough to do without running after madmen
or going mad yourselves.



TITHONUS.

WHY leave my arms, dear Eos? stay
awhile,
Swift night has yet full half her course
to run,

And sleep hangs heavy on the eyes of men
And Gods who slumber on Olympus' top.
Nay, Zeus himself still lies on Here's bosom,
And holds his wife within his warm embrace.

I must begone, Tithonus: night her course
Has run, and sinks beneath the western sky.
The prancing steeds are neighing loud: they snuff
The morning air, and call me to my task
Of daily duty. Fare thee well, old man:
I loved thee once in all thy youthful beauty;
I love thee still in age's slow decay.
Rest thee the while I go to light the world.
When evening's hour returns, and Ocean's stream
Receives my blazing car and wearied horses,
Again I come to thee, and strew our bed

With roses steeped in Hesper's balmy dew.

She pressed a kiss upon his icy lips,
She smoothed his hoary locks with tender care,
Softly she lays him on the downy couch
And flies to ope the golden gates of day.

"Oh, woe to me! oh, heavy fate is mine!
Oh, cursed gift of life that knows no death!
Time was when I was young, and fair, and strong,
And the green forest echoed to my horn
And hounds' loud yelping, as I made my way
Through bush and tangled brake, and climbed the
heights

Whence gush the springs of Ida's thousand foun-
tains.

My javelin broke the wild boar's bristly flank,
My arrows stopped in midway course the deer
Bounding in pride, and pierced his dappled skin.
Well I remember, 'twas a summer's morn,
The mists were thick on Ida, and I stood
Straining my sight, if aught of savage beast
Or bird, or living thing I might discern;
My dogs around me, lying on the ground;
Some sleeping, some with nose upturned, and fol-
lowing

Their master's glance with ever watchful eye;
When, strange—most strange to tell—I heard a
sound

Of trampling horses, and of chariot wheels,
The rushing of a mighty wind; the mist
Was rent in twain before my wondering gaze,

And a bright vision dazzled mortal sense.
Before me stood the golden car of day,
The brass-hoofed horses pawed the trembling
ground,
Obedient to the hand that held the reins,
The fair-haired goddess of the saffron morn.
She saw—she loved—she took me by the hand,
She bade me mount the car, and haste with her
Through heaven's high concave to the downward
slope
That leads to Ocean's stream : There thou shalt
dwell

With me, she said, and thou shalt be my husband,
For ever mine, and I will be thy wife.

“All-seeing Zeus, the King of gods and men,
Gave me the gift of immortality,
The fatal gift, at Eos' earnest prayer—
But she forgot to ask for endless youth,
And what is life without the joys of life,
And golden Aphrodite's sweet desire ?
Full many a day, through the revolving years,
We lived in bliss, and two fair sons were born :
Emathion, and he who fought at Troy,
Memnon the brave, whom swift Achilles slew.
Oh, happy days ! the time we rose together,
And mounting on the car that brings the light
To gods and mortals, chased dull night before us,
And rode triumphant through empyrean heights,
Gladdening the earth. The sons of men looked up
And stayed their toil to wonder as we passed,

So bright she shone who held the gilded reins,
And lashed the coursers through the azure sky,
White-armed as Here, like to Aphrodite
Her swelling bosom and her sparkling eyes ;
While from her saffron robe and streaming hair
Ambrosial odours dropped like evening dew ;
A goddess she, and I a mortal man,
Exulting like a god, sat by her side.
And when our car was plunged in Ocean's wave,
The weary horses loosed, we sank to sleep,
Each in the other's arms, awaiting day.
But now alone I drag the tedious hours—
The long, long hours—while Eos, ever young,
Drives her immortal steeds through aether's fields.

“My eyes are waxing dim, my limbs are shrunk,
The flower of youth is changed for sapless age,
And like an ancient tree stripped bare and leafless,
Riven by lightning, battered by the winds,
I lie, a useless load, and still I live.

“Oh, why should youth and beauty ever fade,
Or why should life still linger in the body,
Worn out, decrepit, a mere husk, a thing
That serves no use of nature ? By my side
A goddess lies, and holds me in her arms ;
But all in vain she seeks to fan the flame,
Fallen and smouldering in the sunken ashes.
This life—it is not waking, 'tis not sleep—
It is a weary, fitful, tossing dream.
Sleep, King of all, oh, close these aching eyes,
Or rather send thy elder brother, Death,

F And Hermes, him who guides departed souls,
That I may see my sire Laomedon,
Whose shadow wanders in Elysian fields,
My dear son Memnon, and the godlike chiefs
R Who fought and died before the walls of Ilion.
T Take back thy cursed gift, O Zeus, or give me
O My youth and strength. O Death, I know thee
now,

Cure of the ills of life, man's last best friend."

C The sun was set, and dewy eve returning
l Brought back fair Eos to Tithonus' bed.
O
A





PRAXITELES.

(*Lucian, "Ερωτες, ii. 397, Hemst.*)

IT was a festival in Cnidos' city :
The gates wide open poured forth
joyful crowds
To visit Aphrodite's verdant groves.
Old men and women, mothers and children, wan-
dered
Beneath o'erarching bowers. Under the trees
In thickest shade hid from the light of day
Tables were set for feast and revelry
And noisy mirth. Hither the common sort
Came frequent ; merry youths and laughing girls
Sought shelter here beneath the leafy tents
Of Aphrodite redolent and love.
But such as deign not with the vulgar crowd
To mingle, turn their steps to other walks ;
And matrons, as they spy the noisy rout,
Cast looks severe askant, and pass along.
'Twas on this festal day three pilgrims came

From foreign lands to worship Aphrodite.
 There was a grove of myrtles ever green,
 Cypress and planes that raised their heads to
 heaven,
 Round which the loving ivy twined her arms.
 The blushing grape hung from the spreading vine,
 Companion meet for myrtle bowers, for love
 And wine are friends that never choose to part.
 Here Aphrodite dwelt: within her shrine
 Of Parian marble bright the goddess stood
 In naked beauty, fresh as from the hand
 Of the divine artificer, and such
 As Ares saw her when the warrior god
 Compressed the willing wife of lame Hephaestus.
 No veil concealed the more than mortal charms,
 The fairest form that ever yet was carved
 By artist's cunning hand. Such she appeared
 To young Anchises when in shepherd's hut
 The amorous goddess doffed her heavenly robes,
 And an immortal shared a mortal's bed—
 Whence sprung Aeneas, as old stories tell;
 Or when on Ida she received the prize
 From Paris and repaid him with the gift
 Of Spartan Helen, who set fire to Troy.
 What gods and heroes saw with waking eyes
 In night's still sleep Praxiteles beheld
 When, all the senses sealed, the soul discerns
 *Things never shown to gross corporeal sight.

* εἶδονσα γὰρ φρὲν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν λαμπρύνεται. Eumen. 104.

Not so in these the later days, when hands
Without the touch divine are impotent
From quarried block to draw the living form,
Which waits the master's art to call it forth.

Strangers, the woman said, I see your eyes
Are fixed, as if much seeing made you wish
To see the more : believe me, 'tis not safe,
Smiling she said, and hereby hangs a tale.
There was a youth of Cnidos of good house,
His name I must not say : 'tis best forgotten.
He gazed like you till he was drunk with love,
And all his soul was swimming in his eyes.
At early dawn he came and took his place
Within the temple : all the day he stayed,
And last he was to leave at eventide.
At first we thought he came to worship, or
Perchance to pray the goddess for her aid,
To bend some wayward girl's reluctant will ;
But murmuring lips and sighs suppressed and
whispers,
And eyes intently fixed betrayed his passion ;
And now upon the walls and on the bark
Of trees he carved the name of Aphrodite,
As if he were the lover, she his mistress.
To make my story short, one day at sunset,
What time we close the temple, this mad fellow,
Slipping behind the door, as we went out,
So to his heart's content was he shut in.
Further we nothing know : less blessed, I ween,
This new Anchises than the old, whose arms

A living not a marble goddess held.
From that day never has this youth been seen :
Some say that he was carried down the rocks,
Or plunged into the sea, as others say.
So much is sure, he never came again.





THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

(*Apuleius, Golden Ass, book x. Euripides,
Troad. 924.*)



HE herdsman lay in Ida's leafy shades
Watching his grazing oxen. High in
heaven

The sun was riding in his mid-day
course,

And Paris, eyes half closed, mused of the hour,
When night should bring Oenone to his arms.
Gently the rod of Hermes touched his hand,
Rise, said the messenger of Zeus, and give
This golden apple beauty's prize to her
Whom thou shalt judge the fairest of the fair.
Before him stood the full-eyed queen of heaven,
The wife and sister of immortal Zeus,
Pallas broad-breasted virgin, wise and brave,
And Aphrodite laughter-loving goddess.
Naked they stood. Such sight to mortal man

Never before was given. Silent he gazed,
Each seeming fairest, fairer each than she
Forgotten now the mountain nymph Oenone.
The sun would erst have set and darkness come
So long he looked upon immortal beauty,
When Here spake: No goddess vies with me
Of all who tread the floors of high Olympus,
The wife of him whose thunder shakes the earth.
Give me the prize and I will give to thee
Power and dominion, and thou shalt rule
O'er many men and many well built cities.

Give me the prize, said Pallas, and I give thee
A better gift than Here. Thou shalt be
Both brave and wise and foremost in the council.
What is a kingly sceptre without wisdom,
And kingly power without a warrior's arm?

Paris, I know thee, Aphrodite said,
To be most sapient of taste and apt
To learn wherein man's chiefest pleasure is.
Power is but toil and idle trouble all,
And as for wisdom, it is crabbed stuff,
Fit food for grey beards and old men to feed on.
The gentle whisper in the silent night,
And warm embraces, honied gifts of love,
These are the works of golden Aphrodite.
Nor power, nor strength, nor wisdom seek from
me,

I give thee young desire and woman's beauty.
By wide Eurotas' reedy banks there dwells
In Lacedaemon, fairest born of women,

Helen from Leda sprung and father Zeus :
Give me the prize, and she shall be thy wife.
If thou wouldst know what Helen is, look here,
Look upon me, and think thou seëst Helen.

He gave the golden fruit to Aphrodite,
And dreamed of Helen in Oenone's arms.





TO AN AGED FRIEND

WHO LIVED ALONE IN THE COUNTRY.



HAPPY the man who in his little farm
Supremely blest,
From anxious troubles and the busy
world
Retires to rest.

In spring he prunes his trees and digs with care
Around the roots,

And autumn, when it comes, rewards his toil
With sweetest fruits.

He eateth some rejoicing in his heart,
And others sends

With his best greetings, and a kindly note
To absent friends.

In grassy fields his cattle take their fill
From morn to night,

And calves and heifers sport and frisk all day
Before his sight.

No horrid noise, nor loud alarms disturb
His calm repose :

At early dawn he rises from his bed
And forth he goes ;
With stick in hand he pays his morning visit
To ducks and hens,
He tends his pigeons, and he wakes the swine
Within their pens.
Of butter and of milk he hath great store
On which he feeds,
Good apples too and pears and other things
For all his needs.
He sees the glorious sun, he feels the warmth,
His sky is bright,
Through the long summer day he lives exulting
In heaven's light.
When winter evenings come, before his fire
He trims his pipe ;
And now and then perchance he slowly eats
An apple ripe.
No woman's voice disturbs his tranquil thoughts,
Nor clamour rude :
He finds that bliss, as wisest men have found,
Is Solitude.



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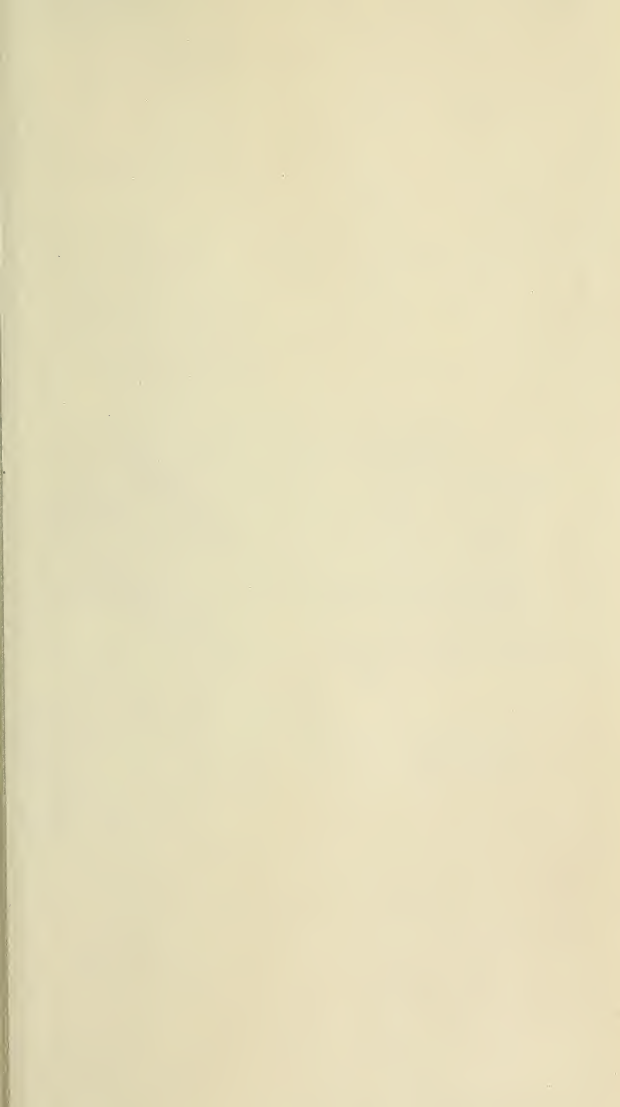
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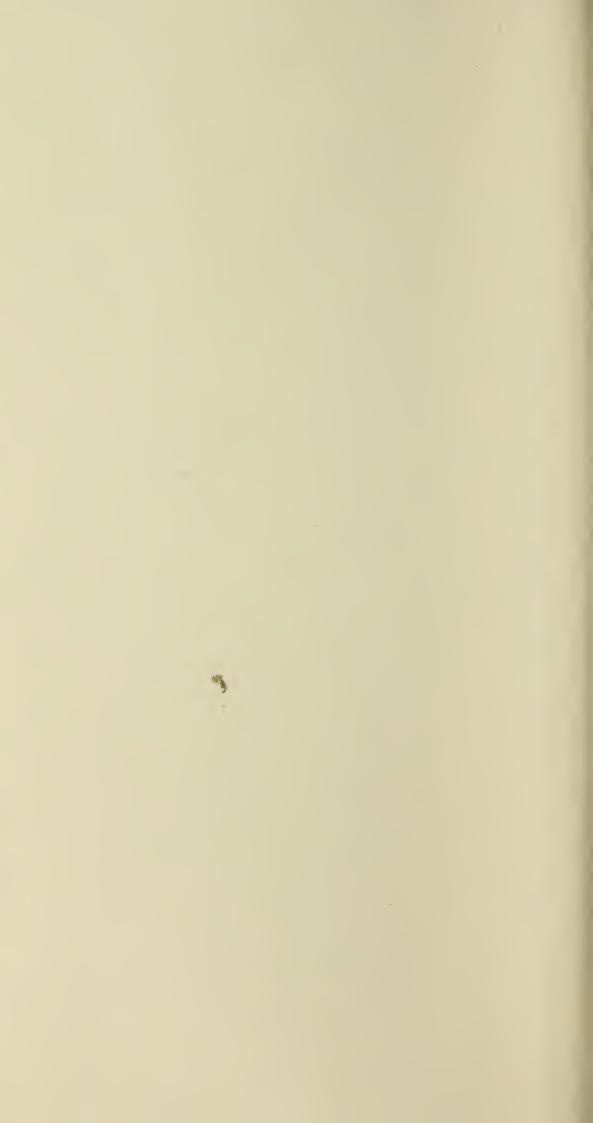
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